Privateer Press™

NO QUARTER MAGAZINE™

ISSUE Nº 5
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HORDES™

UNLEASHED!

WARMACHINE™

FOUR NEW SCENARIOS!

IRON KINGDOMS™

UNCOVERING THE ORGOTH

MARCH 2006

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ON THE COVER

TITAN VS. TROLLS
Enraged by its Paingiver taskmasters, few things in western Immoren can stand up to a rampaging Titan Gladiator.

Brian Snoddy
One of the founders of Privateer Press, Brian Snoddy is a legend in the industry. He lives in Seattle where he collaborates on Privateer Press projects and collects Samurai armor. An award winning illustrator and contributor for dozens of products over the years, Brian is also reportedly able to kill a man using only his thumb.

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Matt Wilson passes out the yearly bonus to the crew.

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No Quarter Magazine

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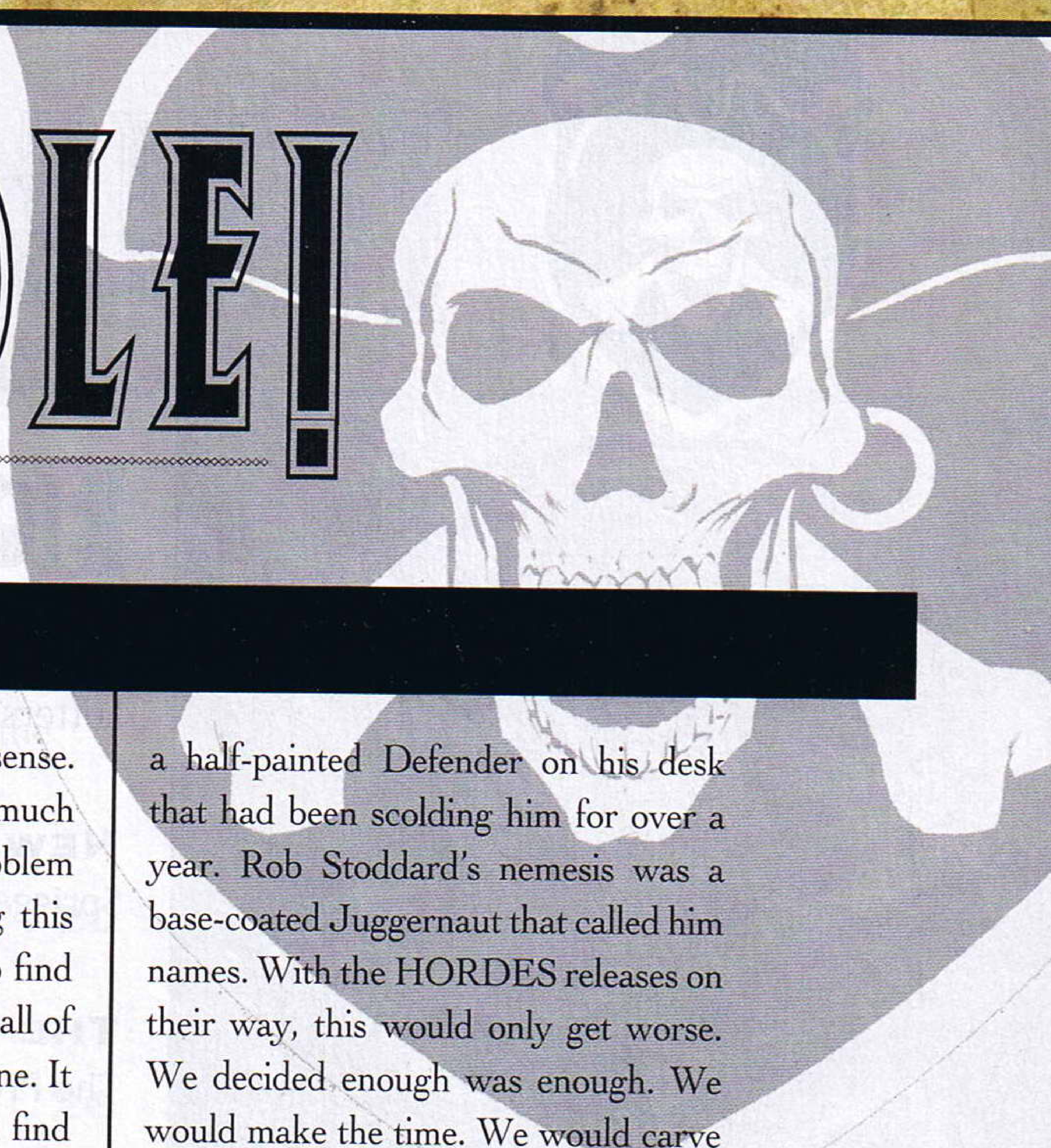
FIRE IN THE HOLE!



Paint like you've got a pair.

Around these parts, few things bring as much joy to our black little pirate hearts as "Comp Day". It is that golden day every month where Marky the Warmarmot rolls around a cart with the latest model releases. We get to add these to our own collections. Often we take a few minutes out of our ludicrously busy day to ogle the pieces, chat about converting this or that, gibber about how we will paint them, etc. I lovingly put mine in a box under my desk, usually with some vague comment about what army list they will be added to. I always have absolutely every intention of assembling, basing, priming, and painting every one of these little treasures.

When I started here at Privateer Press, I had a fully painted Cygnar force and a fully painted Protectorate force. I painted at least twice a week, and always had a project cooking as soon as one was finished. Since my first day here, I have painted exactly one Hunter warjack, one Axer warbeast, and 1/3 of a Driller warjack. The Driller sits on my bookshelf and mocks me daily. He has done this for over a year now. Actually, I think at this point he's given up on mockery and has started a pouty, brooding phase in an effort to guilt me into finishing his paintjob. The Axer and Hunter make fun of him. He's had enough.

I have nearly a metric ton of gorgeous figs in that treasure chest under my desk, and have barley touched any. "What's the hold-up" you ask? Time and space. No, not in the cosmic sense. I'm talking about the "I have too much to do and no place to paint" problem that I think most of you reading this can relate to. It's damned hard to find a spare minute with jobs, life, and all of the other things we want to get done. It can be equally challenging just to find a spot to put your supplies. Even when we do find the spare moment it's far too easy to become distracted by other things. And let's face it – painting alone can be boring as hell.

Last year, in an effort to make some progress and shut that Driller up, I tried to set up a paint station at home. My long-suffering wife Jennifer understood that I needed a space and gave up part of our living room to the cause. This worked like a charm - for exactly 2.3 hours. The thing is, although my wife is very tolerant of my gamer ways, she also loves to adopt stray pets. My determined effort to paint more, directly and violently coincided with her attempt to introduce two feral kittens into our already critter filled abode. The resulting Technicolor™ collision will forever go down in Huffman family history, as "the Great Footprint Fiasco". I still have lovely Cygnar blue paw prints over most of my living room. That was the end of painting at home.

As it turns out, I am not alone around here as a paint delinquent. After a quick survey around the halls, I found most of us had a grand design for our next project but little progress. Even the indomitable Matt Wilson had a half-painted Defender on his desk that had been scolding him for over a year. Rob Stoddard's nemesis was a base-coated Juggernaut that called him names. With the HORDES releases on their way, this would only get worse. We decided enough was enough. We would make the time. We would carve out the space. We would unite. Our models would not get the better of us. We would fight back. We would paint like we had a pair.

The semi-official Privateer paint night was born. After hours, once a week for the last several weeks, we have turned our lobby into a paint stocked, pizza-filled, cat free, task-light festooned studio. Between solving the time/space issues and having all of us in one room painting I can tell you that my HORDES forces are coming along nicely. If you, like us, have a nagging model problem, I highly recommend ganging up on the little devils.

I can't say if we'll manage to keep it up every week, but I can tell you this – Even though he's not top of the task list, my Driller hasn't said one peep in a month.

Until next time,

Paint Like You've Got a Pair!

Duncan Huffman

-Editor in Chief

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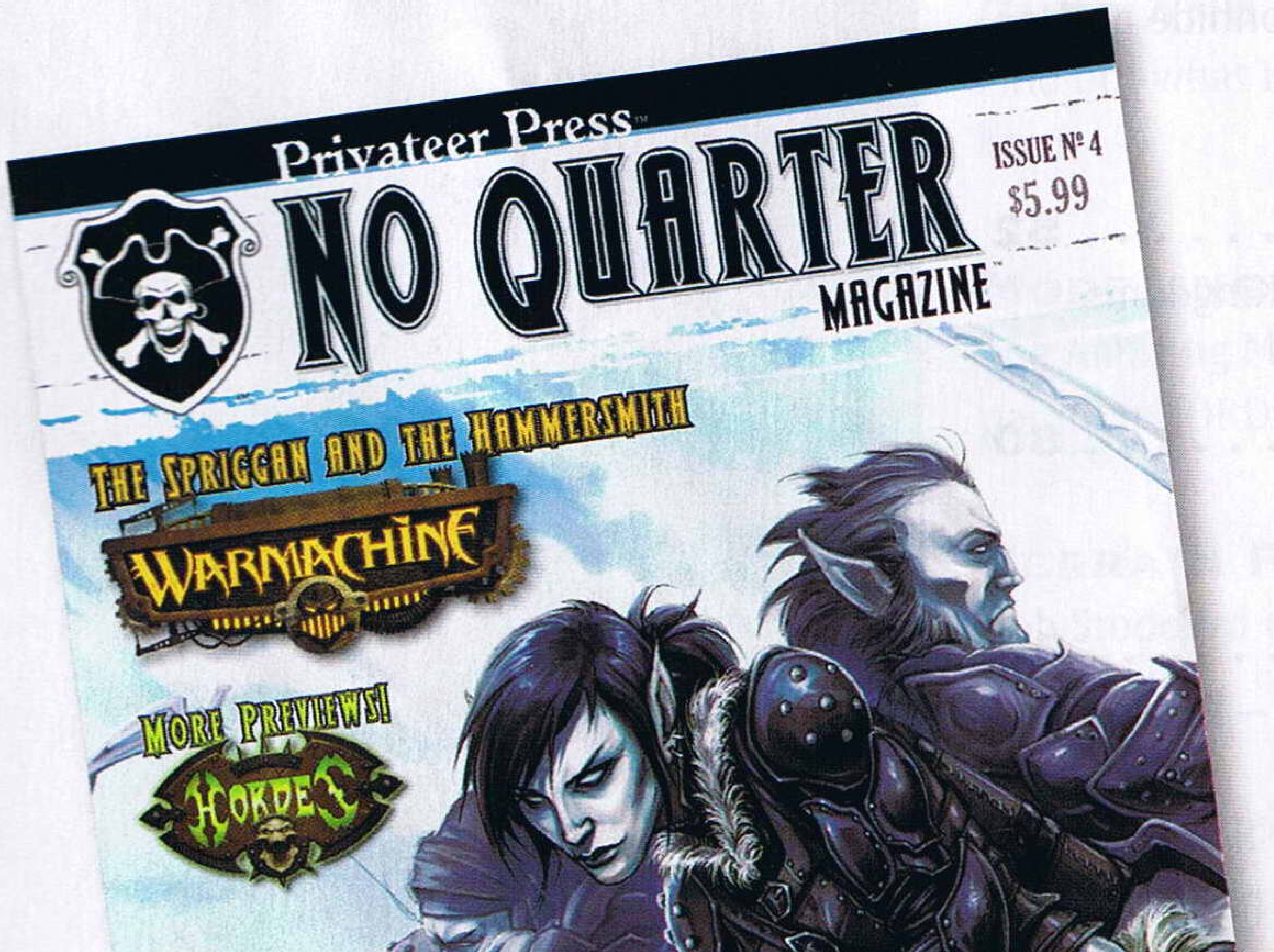
BOATSWAIN'S CALL

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, AND GENERAL SHENANIGANS



Hammersmith Errata

The wording on the Hammersmith chain attack from NQM#4 (page 18) has changed after the magazine and cards were printed. It has been altered to bring it in line with the original design.

Chain Attack - Clobber- *If the Hammersmith has both arms systems functional and hits with both of its initial Hammer attacks against the same target during the same activation, after resolving the attacks it may immediately make an additional melee attack against the target. If the attack succeeds, the target suffers no damage but is immediately pushed d3" directly away from the Hammersmith. A pushed model moves at half rate in rough terrain and stops if it comes in contact with an obstacle, obstruction or model with an equal or larger sized base. The pushed model cannot be targeted by free strikes during this movement. Immediately after the pushed model is moved the Hammersmith may make a follow up move up to the distance the pushed model was moved directly towards the center of the pushed models base.*

We are all awaiting the licensed action figures and a comic book coming out in 2k6. Can we expect to see a Stryker cha cha cha Chiahead anytime soon? If not, are they any other Warmachine related goodies in the pipeline?

-Thundergod

You'll see more in the future, no doubt about it.

Well, I don't suspect we'll see any plant based products any time soon. I can tell you this, the products that you do see from us will only be those that we think match with our setting and have the kind of outstanding quality you have come to expect from Privateer Press.

I just read NQ#4 and I loved the historical scenario. I was wondering if there were going to be any more?

- Matt"The Ripper"Thomas

Glad you enjoyed it Matt, it was a real pleasure to share it with you. The response to that piece was so overwhelmingly positive that we are already discussing possible future installments.

I can't make any promises just yet, but if all goes well you will see something along these lines in a later issue.

One note on this article – Due to a last minute layout issue, the credits were bumped off of the first page. Artwork: Chippy (Thornwood war illustration inserted into the map), James Ryman (Iron Fang Pikemen and Kossites), Franz Vohwinkle (the excellent new illustrations for Magziev Alexander Karchev and Colonel Drake Cathmore), Kyle Hunter (map borrowed from Apotheosis), and Josh Manderville (considerable tinkering with that map for this specific article, as well as laying out the rest). The narrative was written by Doug Seacat and the scenario was designed by Doug Seact and Jason Soles.

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE DON'T KILL PROFFESOR PENDRAKE!!!!

I bring this up because in the next issue preview on No Quarter Magazine 4 there is the title "saying goodbye to an old friend" and Pendrake was in a very vulnerable position in the end of the story "death in the bloodstone marches"

I mean, it would suck if monster hunter Alten Ashley dies or even worse Quimut (especially since we don't know that much about him yet) as they are trying to rescue the prof...but it's friggin' Pendrake!!! You can't kill him!!! He's awesome!!!

ahem

Anyway, thanks for your time, and I leave our favorite adventuring scholar's fate in privateer press' infinite wisdom...

Yours truly

- Josh

Well Josh,

I have to say; this one choked us up a bit. We love the old kook around here too, and it's hard to see him in such a predicament.

Alas, he is his own man, and will do what he wants in the pursuit of knowledge and adventure, no matter the cost. I can't say if he'll make it out or not. Based on his latest missive (craftily decoded on pages 46-49 in this very issue) I can say that it is not looking good for the Professor. Stay tuned, as soon as we know more, so will you.

Got a cool landmark
in your town?

Send us pictures of your 'jacks
out on walkabout to
jackabouttown@privateerpress.com
If we like 'em, we'll print 'em.

deCoster Koen's Kodiak dresses to impress at Het Gravensteen Castle in Ghent, Belgium

First off, lemme say that I am loving the way you guys are moving. You're fast paced and very good at helping us have lives...I mean fun! Now to my question. Its obvious you're showing previews and giving out fluff regarding Hordes things, but will NQ be getting thicker eventually due to having new Hordes units and rules in it?

Sincerely,

Luke from WI

Thanks Luke,

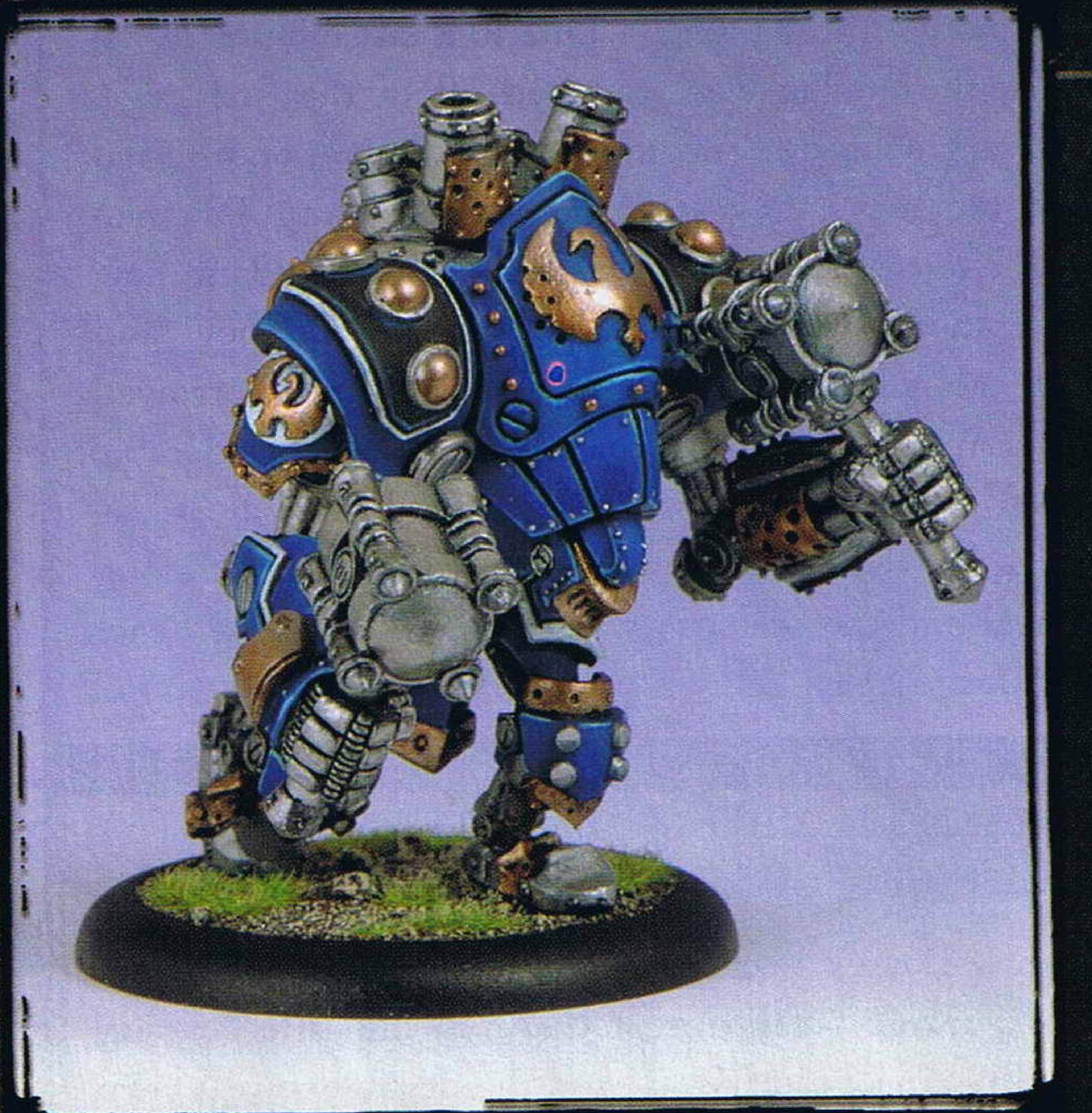
We are looking into the possibility of more pages as time moves on. There is also the possibility of even taking the publication to a monthly schedule. We won't be doing either in the next few issues, but as soon as they make sense, you'll see one or the other – if not both.

For now, we will continue to try to deliver as balanced of a content mix as we possibly can. Some folks do play all of our properties, but we don't want those who focus on just one to be left out in the cold either. Some issues may have a slightly different focus due to the story we need to tell at the time, but overall we'll bring you enough of each property to get you to the next issue.

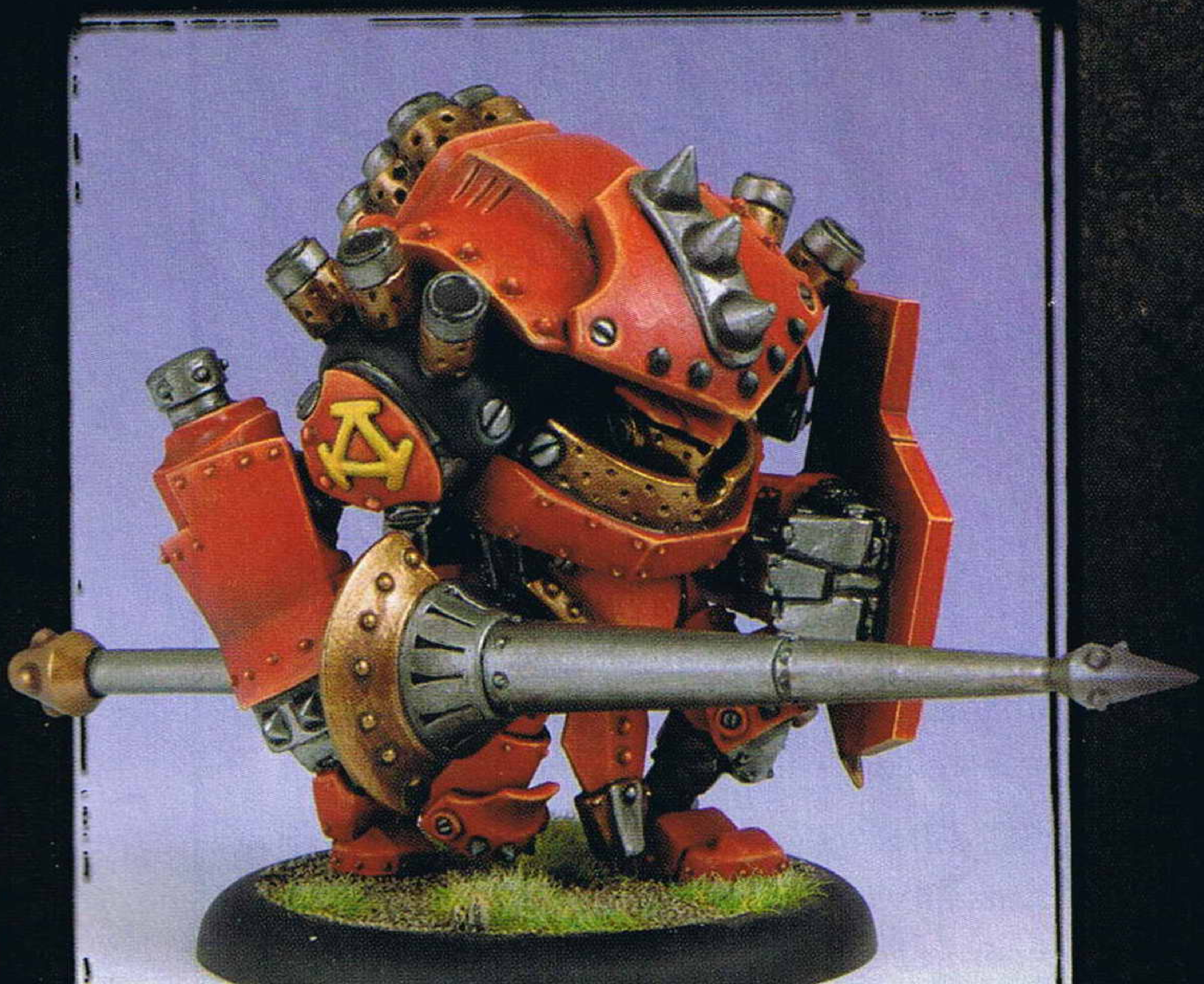
WARMACHINE New Releases

March

CYGNAR HAMMERSMITH HEAVY WARJACK - ALTHOUGH BUILT ON THE SAME CHASSIS AS THE CENTURION, GONE ARE THE INTRICATELY MECHANIZED ARMAMENTS, REPLACED BY MASSIVE TWIN WEAPONS KNOWN AS FORGE HAMMERS. THE FORGE HAMMERS ARE CAPABLE OF ROCKING EVEN THE HEAVIEST WARJACK BACK ON ITS HEELS. EVERY TITANIC BLOW PUSHES ITS FOE BACK AS THE HAMMERSMITH KEEPS UP THE PRESSURE, STRIDING FORWARD TO STRIKE AGAIN IN A CACOPHONOUS RHYTHM, LIKE AN IRONWORKER SHAPING METAL.



CYGNAR HAMMERSMITH HEAVY WARJACK
SCULPTED BY: JEFF WILHELM
PIP 31039 $29.99



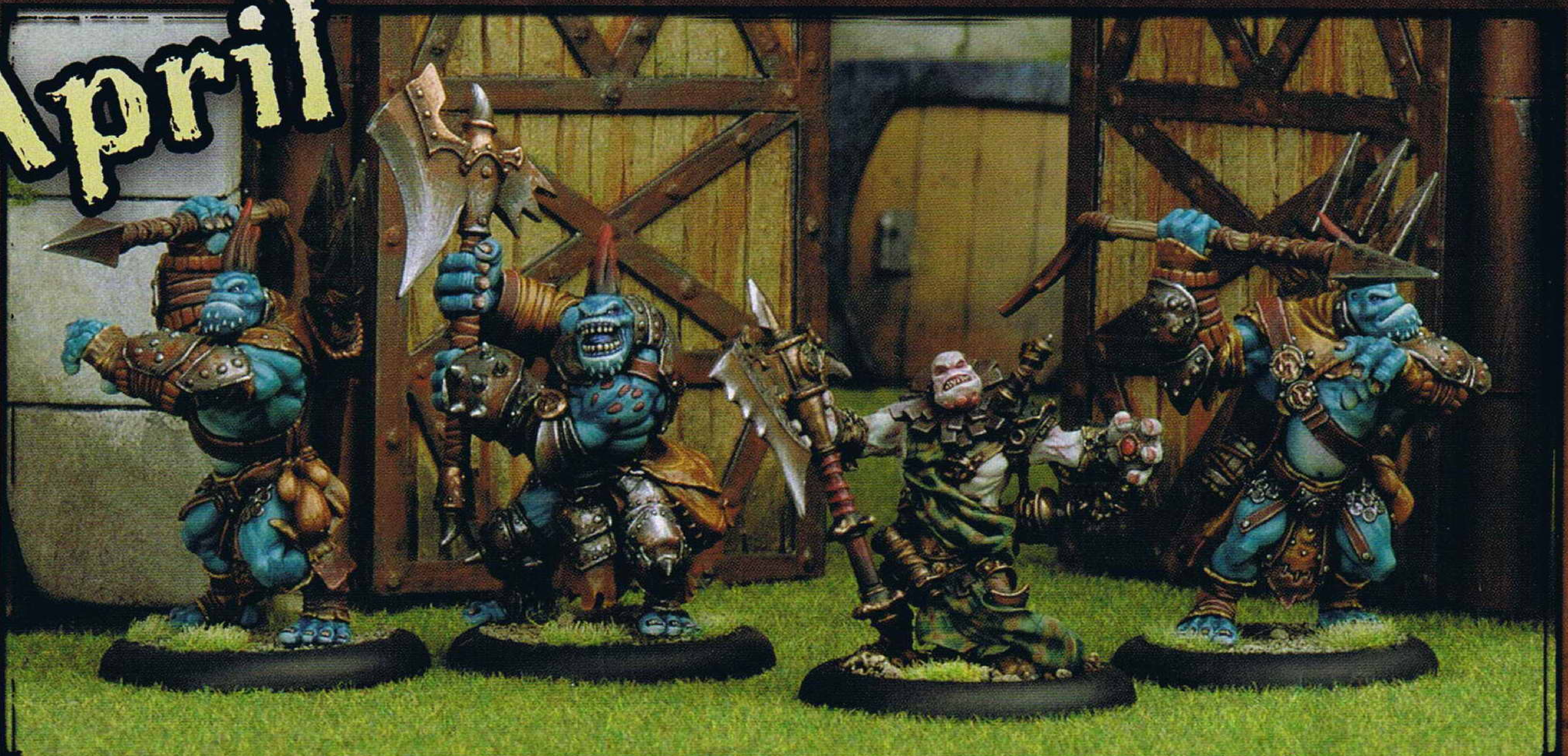
KHADOR SPRIGGAN HEAVY WARJACK
SCULPTED BY: PETER FLANNERY
PIP 33039 $29.99

KHADOR SPRIGGAN HEAVY WARJACK - THE SPRIGGAN PLOWS INTO COMBAT LIKE AN UNYIELDING AVALANCHE. THE 'JACK'S TREMENDOUS WEIGHT ALLOWS IT TO STAMPEDE THROUGH INFANTRY, CRUSHING UNDERFOOT THOSE TOO SLOW TO AVOID ITS LUMBERING ASSAULT. WITH ITS MASSIVE LANCE, IT PIERCES THE HEART-FIRE OF ENEMY WARJACKS. IF ITS FOES SURVIVE, IT CAN FEND OFF BLOWS WITH ITS FORMIDABLE ASSAULT SHIELD—RUGGED ENOUGH TO TURN ASIDE MOST ANY WEAPON AND HEAVY ENOUGH TO DELIVER CRUSHING COUNTER-ATTACKS.

HORDES™

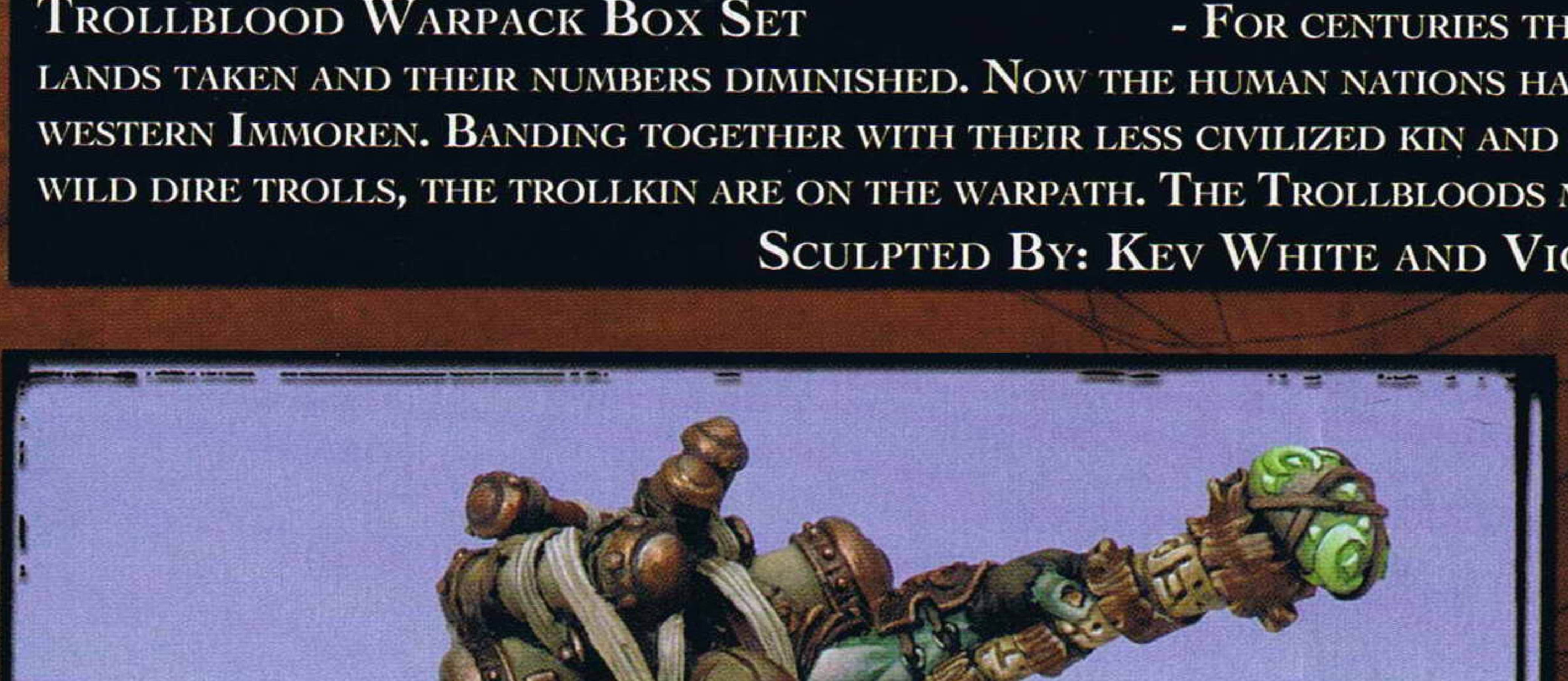
TROLLBLOODS

April



Trollblood Warpack Box Set - For centuries the Trollbloods have seen their sacred lands taken and their numbers diminished. Now the human nations have brought war to their last refuges in western Immoren. Banding together with their less civilized kin and united with heavily armed trolls and wild dire trolls, the trollkin are on the warpath. The Trollbloods march to war to claim what is theirs.

Sculpted By: Kev White and Victor Martins • PIP 71001 $49.99

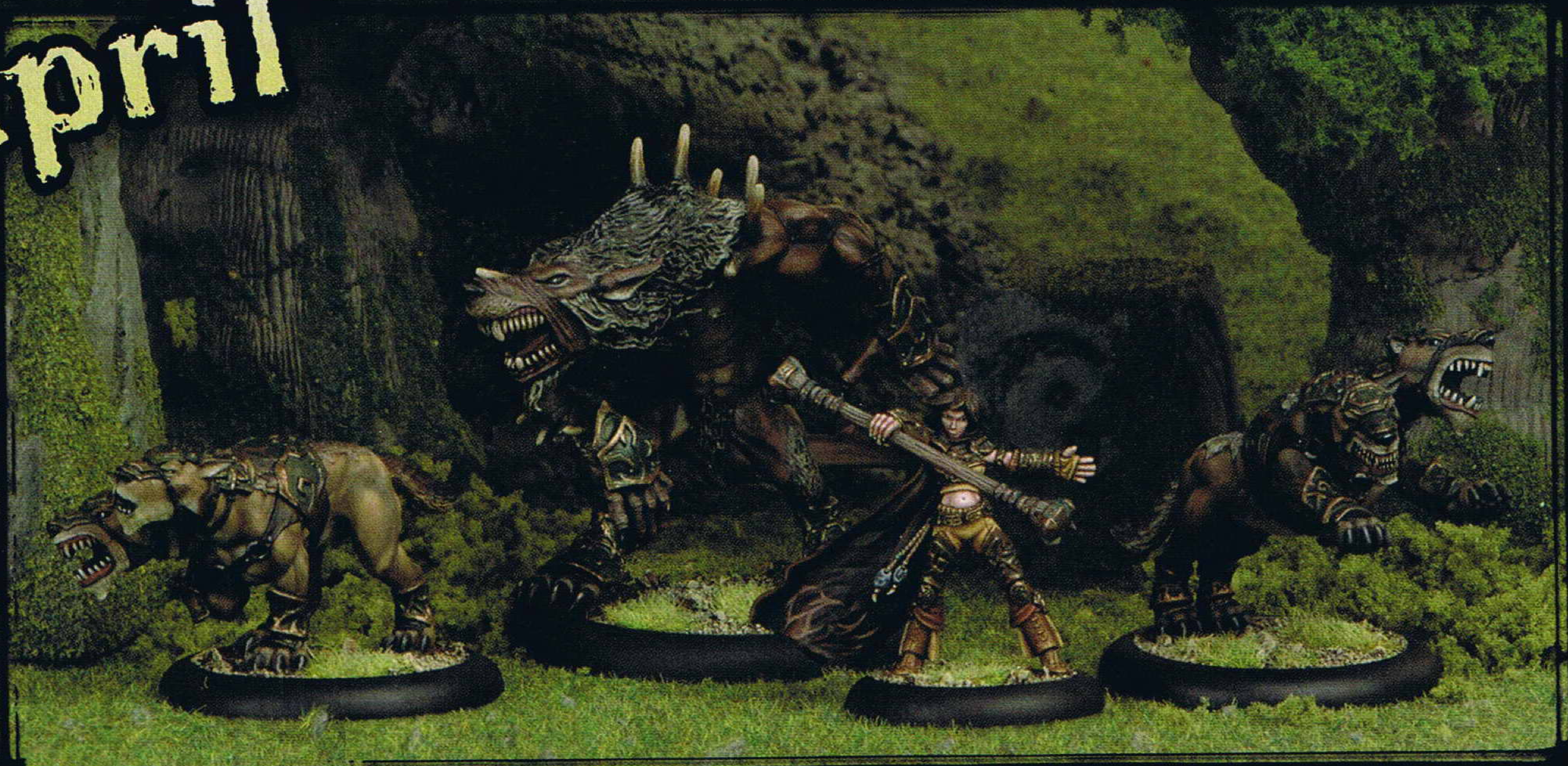


Trollblood Warlock Hoarluk Doomshaper - The trollkin shaman Hoarluk Doomshaper is a walking legend who wades into battle with mad endurance, heedless of punishments inflicted by the weapons of his enemies. By lifelong effort and force of will, Doomshaper has gained mastery over full-blood trolls, including most particularly the formidable dire trolls, who listen to him as if he were kin. Doomshaper's emergence from the Gnarls is a dire omen for all who oppose the Trollblood.

Trollkin Warlock Haorluk Doomshaper
Sculpted By: Felix Paniagua
PIP 71002 $14.99

Circle Orboros

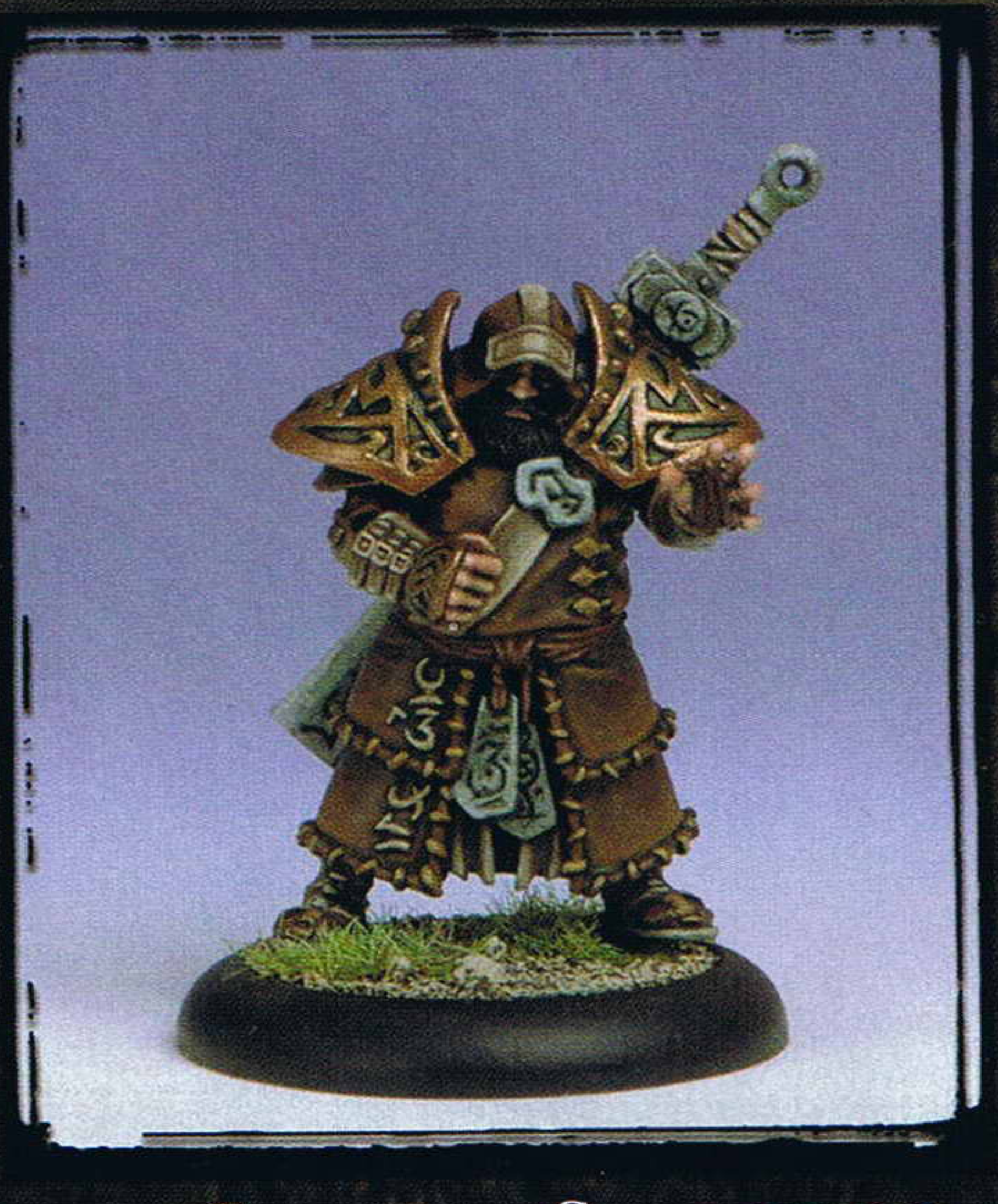
April



Circle Orboros Warpack Box Set - Little is known of this mysterious and secretive ancient order of druids. Although few in number, they wield great power and influence wherever the shadow of wilderness falls. Capable of summoning the forces of storm and stone, their will is rarely contested. Now they command the beasts of the wild to fight any who would dare trespass upon their lands.

Sculpted By: Kev White • PIP 72001 $49.99

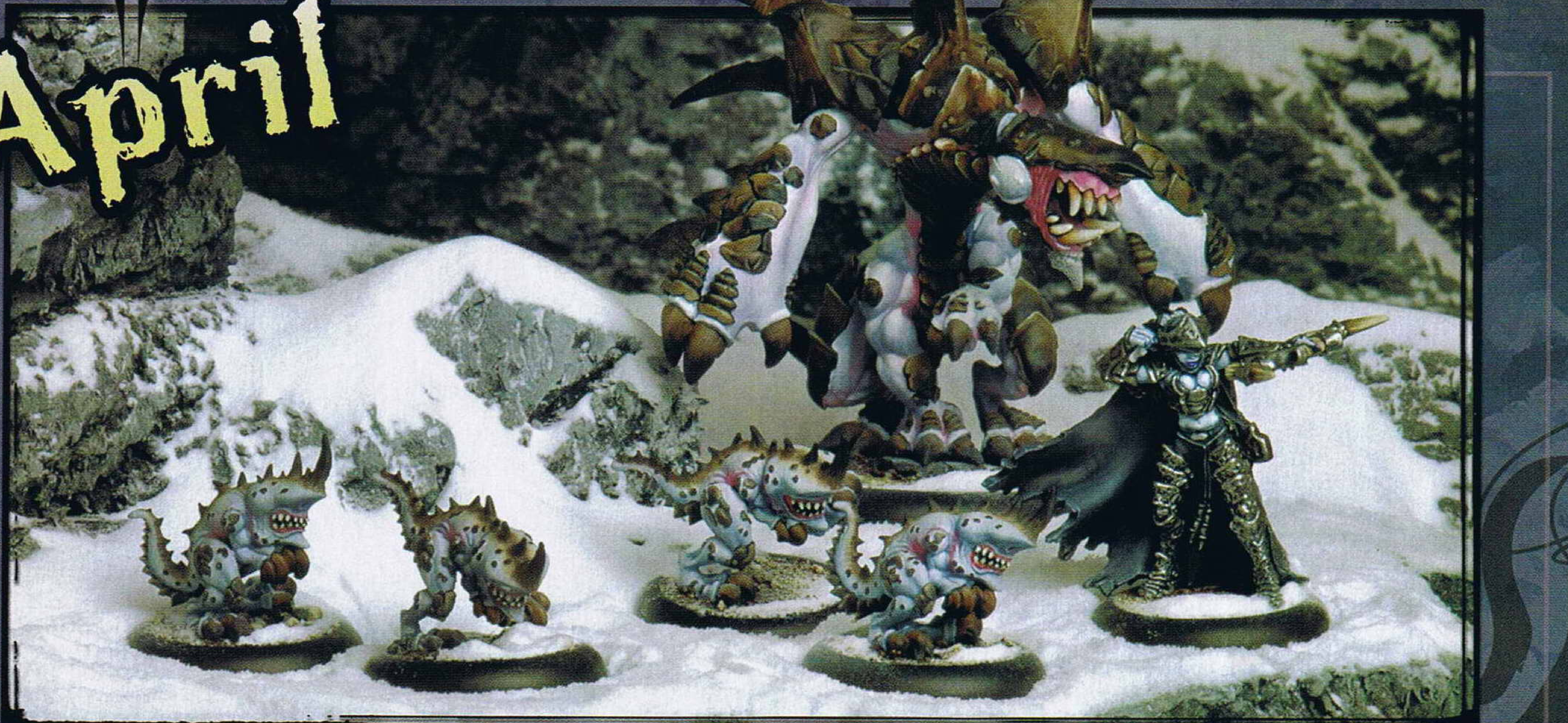
Circle Orboros Warlock Baldur the Stonecleaver - A bastion of strength and resolve, noted for his steadfast loyalty, other druidic leaders describe Baldur Stonecleaver as the Rock of Orboros. Baldur claims he was born in a bear cave near Boarsgate, but there is a Khadoran flavor to his features and hulking frame. The Stonecleaver is a paragon of the earth-shaping path of druidic magic—he has a deep understanding of stone, earth, and the forest.



Circle Warlock Baldur the Stonecleaver
Sculpted By: Jerzy Montwill
PIP 72002 $9.99

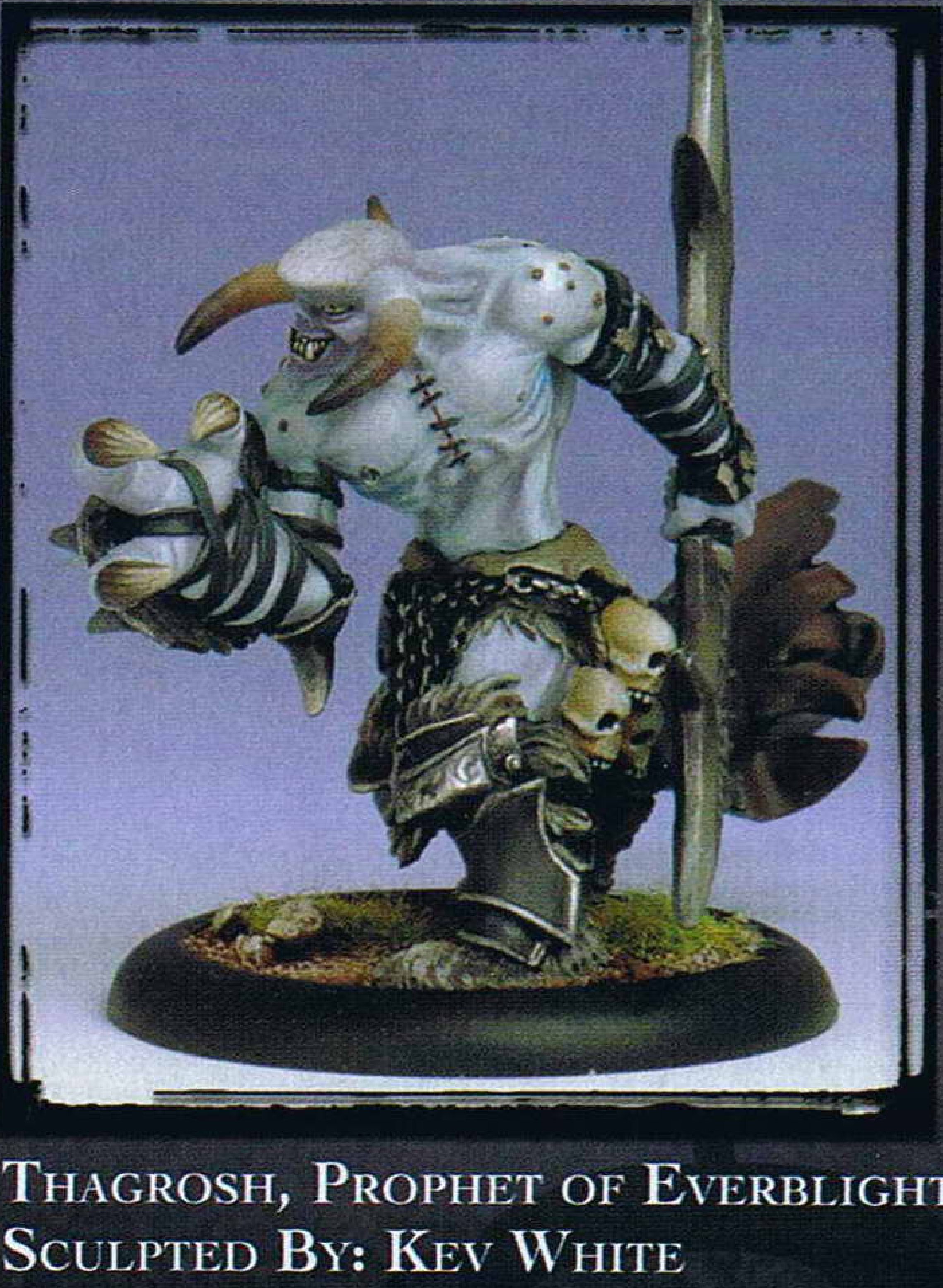
Legion of Everblight

April



LEGIONS OF EVERBLIGHT WARPACK BOX SET - THE DRAGON EVERBLIGHT WAS THOUGHT DEFEATED BY THE IOSANS CENTURIES AGO, BUT ONE DOES NOT SO EASILY STOP THE IMMORTAL SCIONS OF THE DRAGONFATHER. EVERBLIGHT HAS RETURNED FROM HIS PRISON IN THE TOP OF THE WORLD AND NOW UNLEASHES HIS NEWLY MASSED LEGION OF BLIGHTED BEASTS.

SCULPTED BY: WERNER KLOCKE, FELIX PANIAGUA, JOSE ROIG • PIP 73001 $49.99

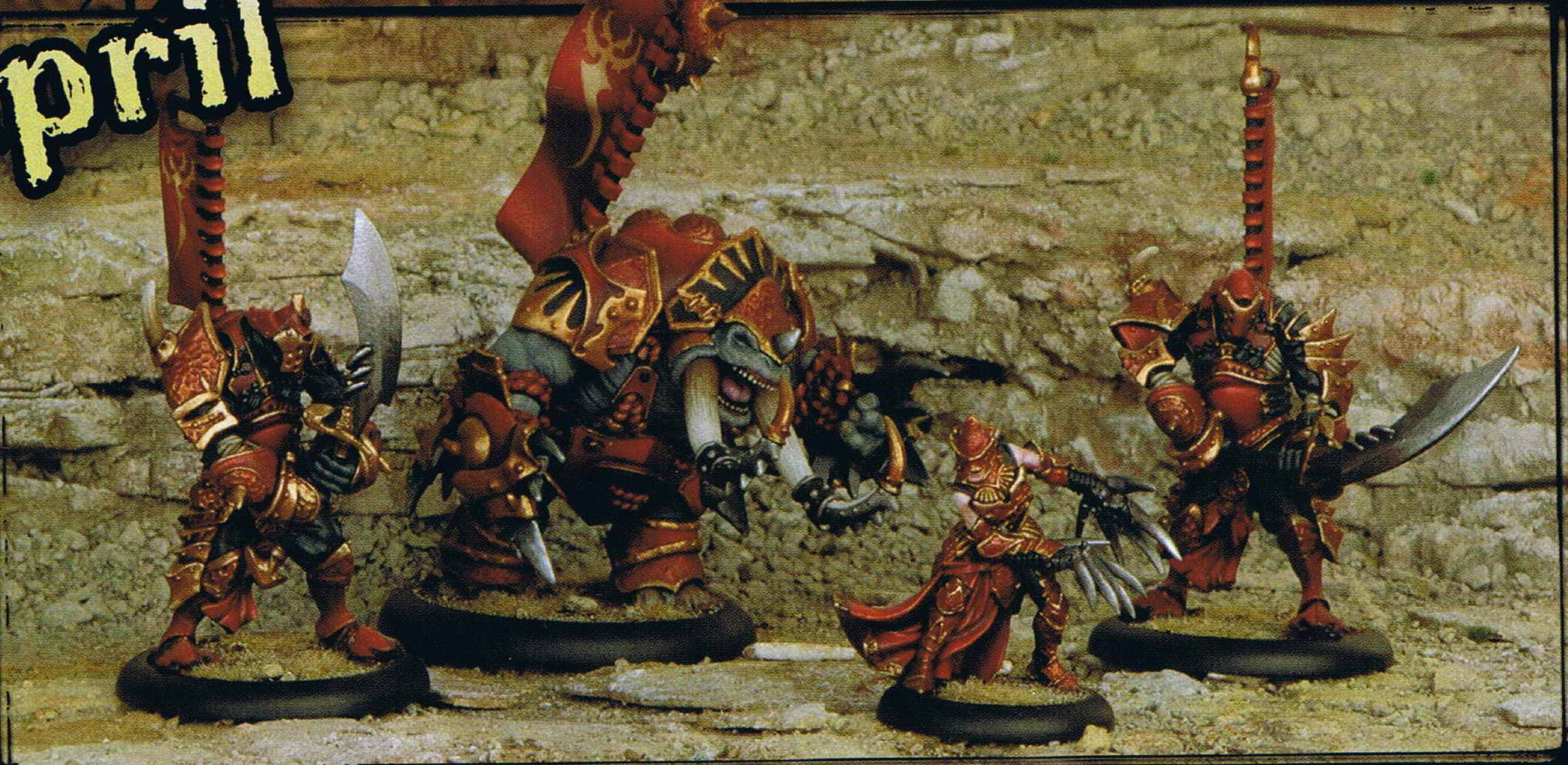


THAGROSH, PROPHET OF EVERBLIGHT
SCULPTED BY: KEV WHITE
PIP 73002 $17.99

LEGION OF EVERBLIGHT WARLOCK THAGROSH, PROPHET OF EVERBLIGHT - THE ANNALS OF HISTORY WILL REMEMBER THAGROSH HELLBORNE AS THE OGRUN WHO UNLEASHED THE LEGION OF EVERBLIGHT ONTO THE WORLD. EVERBLIGHT IS HIS PATRON, CONSTANT ADVISOR, AND GOD. THE BLIGHT HE SPREADS EXTENDS DOWN FROM THE ICY NORTH WHILE HE STRIDES AT ITS VANGUARD AS DEATH MADE FLESH. HE IS A TERROR UNEQUALLED ON CAEN, ABLE TO WIELD THE GREATEST BLIGHTED MAGIC, LEAVING THE CHOKING ASH OF BLIGHTED ANNIHILATION IN HIS WAKE.

SKORNE

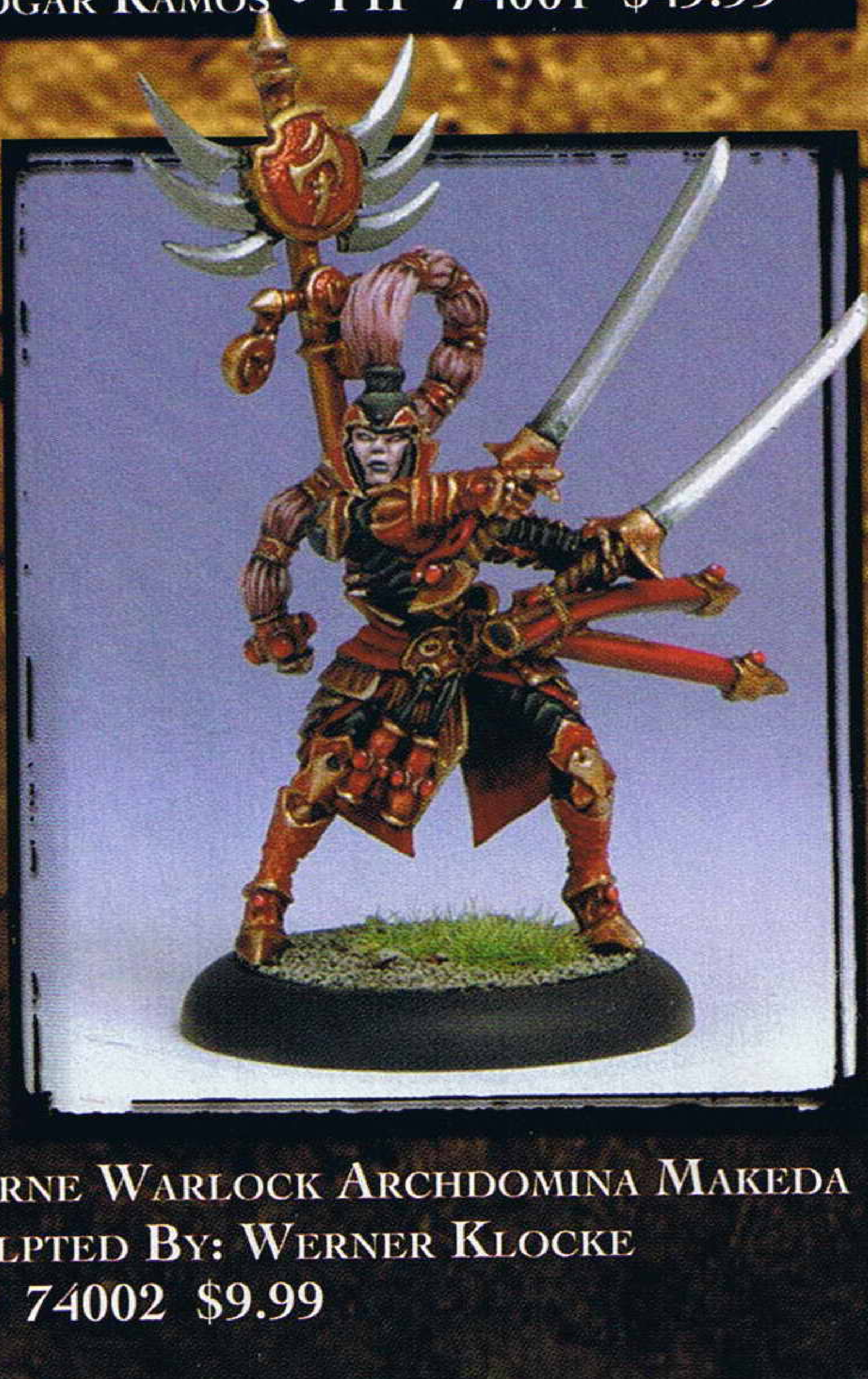
April



Skorne Warpack Box Set - From beyond the treacherous Bloodstone Marches, the savage race of the Skorne now march on western Immoren with one purpose: the utter subjugation of all its nations under their dreaded touch. With this army of sorrows come warbeasts the likes of which the nations of men have never seen.

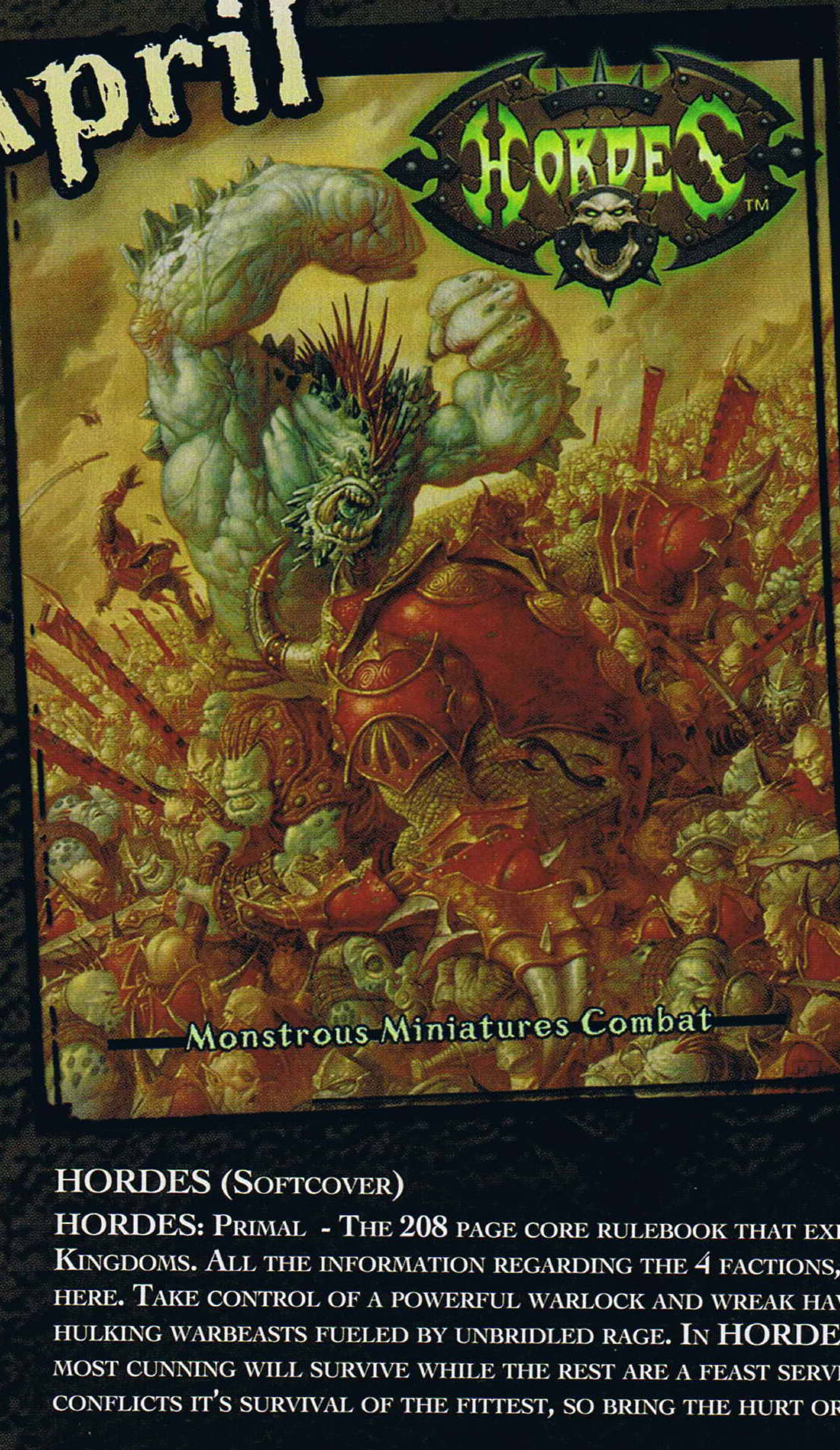
Sculpted By: Gregory Clavilier, Werner Klocke, Edgar Ramos • PIP 74001 $49.99

Skorne Warlock Archdomina Makeda - Makeda is the Conqueror's Sword. Archdomina of the Western Reaches, she leads the skorne army—the success or failure



Skorne Warlock Archdomina Makeda
Sculpted By: Werner Klocke
PIP 74002 $9.99

April



HORDES (Softcover)

HORDES: Primal - The **208** page core rulebook that explores the wilder side of the Iron Kingdoms. All the information regarding the *4* factions, the models, the history is all here. Take control of a powerful warlock and wreak havoc on your foes with a horde of hulking warbeasts fueled by unbridled rage. In **HORDES**, only the strongest, fastest, and most cunning will survive while the rest are a feast served up for your warbeasts. In these conflicts it's survival of the fittest, so bring the hurt or head for the hills!

PIP 1005 $24.99

HORDES (Hardcover)

HORDES: Primal Special Edition Hardcover – This special edition of the core rule book will only produced during the initial print run of **HORDES: Primal**. **208** pages encased in an amazing hardcover will be highly sought after by many collectors and fans alike.

PIP 1006 $39.99

Minion Totem Hunter - From across the southern ocean comes a frightening and alien creature. Little is known of its culture, its beliefs, or its civilization, but its motives are clear: it lives to hunt. It values only the kill, reaping grisly trophies from the most formidable adversaries it can track down. This practice is a sacred ceremony to the Hunter, whereby each ritual kill adds to its strength, drawing on the vital energies of the slain.

PIP *74002* $14.99

HOARLUK DOOMSHAPER, SHAMAN OF THE GNARLS

TROLLBLOOD TROLLKIN WARLOCK CHARACTER

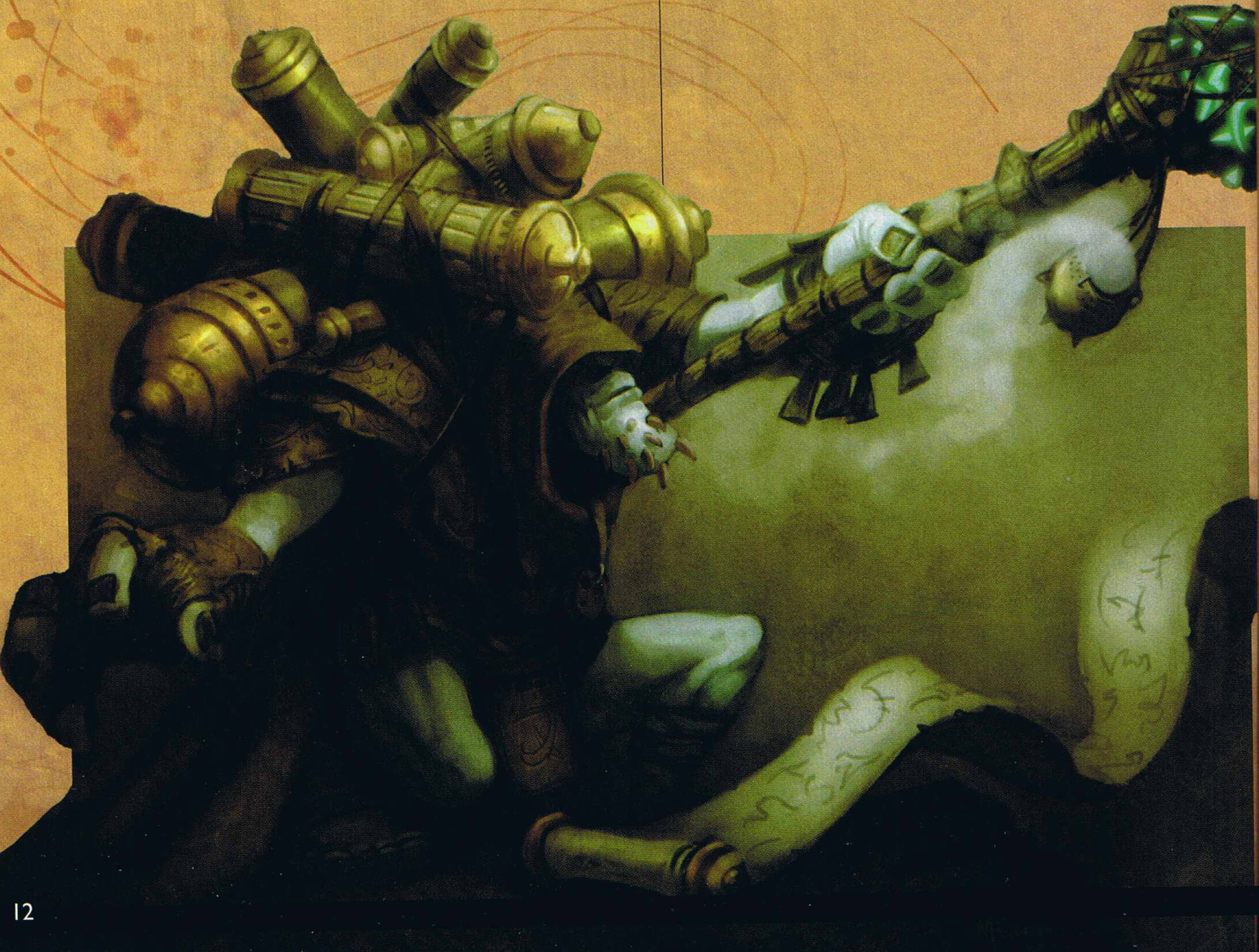
> *There is no warlock more tied to the blood of trolls. The strength he brings in our blackest hour may carry us through. If we endure, it will be a testament to the Doomshaper's works.*
>
> —Chieftain Madrak Ironhide

The Dhunian shaman Hoarluk Doomshaper is a walking legend who has explored the face of Caen for over a hundred years. Though some elders are older than Doomshaper, few are so vigorous and irrepressible. Hoarluk wades into battle with mad fortitude and refuses to die regardless of the punishment inflicted by the weapons of his enemies. Many of the younger kin who have watched him in battle are convinced he is completely impervious to pain and has learned to regenerate like a full-blood troll.

Hoarluk has an obsessive fascination with the mystical power of the blood tie shared by troll breeds, and he believes in the superiority of troll blood over the diluted substance in the veins of other races. Resentment and awareness of the waning of his species fuels his scorn of humanity. Even in the Gnarls outsiders have encroached on trollkin lands to steal what is theirs by ancient right, and Doomshaper intends to strike back with a vengeance. The time for war is overdue.

Few are willing to speak against Doomshaper, and those who disagree do so quietly. The mighty shaman is prone to outbursts of temper and scathing indictments of those he considers foolish. Hoarluk has challenged countless elders to duels and has never yet been defeated, cruelly humiliating those who fall beneath his staff. Many consider him insane, yet even his detractors agree Dhunia chose the old shaman and try to avoid his wrath. He has spent his life working to embolden the trollkin of the Gnarls against human interlopers.

Even before recent troubles, Doomshaper traveled from kriel to kriel gathering recruits and leading strikes against any humans or other species foolish enough to plunder the Gnarls. He has obliterated at least two



logging companies that began to poach beyond the marked trees and slaughtered no less than three tribes of bogrin who attempted to settle near his home. His acts have put him at odds with more temperate trollkin, like Chief Ironhide of the Thornwood, until the druids' recently foiled plot forced an uneasy alliance. Though Hoarluk is not a chief, he carries tremendous influence over all the tribes inhabiting the length and breadth of the Gnarls, the mightiest surviving bastion of trollkin tradition. No chief of the Gnarls dares ignore his words.

This wizened elder has spent decades recovering lost krielstones and deciphering ancient runes. He feels the weight of his ancestors on his shoulders where he keeps a collection of transcribed lore. This interest is not academic but the key to great untapped powers the shaman intends to recover and use as weapons in the battles ahead.

By his lifelong effort and force of will, Doomshaper has gained unequalled power over full-blood trolls. He has spoken to all troll breeds, and they listen to him as if he were kin. Bearing bloodstones those brutes recognize as sacred, he has reinforced ancient pacts between species. Hoarluk earned immortality when he strode unarmed into the forest and returned with several dire trolls in tow. The beasts had never heeded the requests of their lesser cousins, and word of this deed has spread to every tribe, for these creatures have become the greatest weapons of the desperate trollkin.

Trolls are the chosen wrath of Dhunia, and this is the age where they will make their stand. Doomshaper enters every battle as if it were armageddon and as if the salvation of all troll-kind hinges on its outcome. Some elders whisper that the roots of the fire burning in his eyes trace back to the death of his daughters killed decades ago, but Hoarluk will not speak of these things. Whatever drives him, the emergence of Doomshaper from the forests of the Gnarls is a dire omen for those who have earned the wrath of the trollkin.

SPECIAL RULES

DOOMSHAPER					CMD 7
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM
5	6	5	4	13	14

GNARLROOT		
SPECIAL	POW	P+S
Multi	5	11

FURY	7
DAMAGE	16
FIELD ALLOWANCE	C
VICTORY POINTS	5
POINT COST	54
BASE SIZE	MEDIUM

Feat: Dhunia's Rage - One of Dhunia's eldest war shamans, Doomshaper can invoke the raw rage of the Ravaged Mother to bring a dread reckoning on the enemies of the Trollblood. At his call, enemy beasts and warlocks are stricken with excruciating pain fueled by lingering primal energies that tears them apart from within.

While in Doomshaper's control area this round, enemy models take d3 damage points for each fury or focus point they spend. While in Doomshaper's control area this round, enemy warbeasts take d3 damage points each time they are forced.

DOOMSHAPER

Calming Effect - When a friendly Dire Troll in Doomshaper's control area frenzies, it never selects a friendly model to attack.

Scroll of the Will of Balasar - Once per game, Doomshaper may use the Scroll of the Will of Balasar to cause a warbeast that frenzies within his control area to charge a legal target chosen by Doomshaper's controller instead of frenzying normally.

Tough - When Doomshaper suffers sufficient damage to be destroyed, his controller rolls a d6. On a 5 or 6, Doomshaper is knocked down instead of being destroyed. If Doomshaper is not destroyed, he is reduced to one wound.

GNARLROOT

Furious Might - Add +1 to the damage roll for each unspent fury point on Doomshaper.

Reach - 2" melee range.

Withered Staff - Doomshaper may upkeep one spell in play without paying a fury point.

<table>
<tr><th>SPELL</th><th>COST</th><th>RNG</th><th>AOE</th><th>POW</th><th>UP</th><th>OFF</th></tr>
<tr><td>ACCURSED</td><td>3</td><td>10</td><td>-</td><td>12</td><td></td><td>X</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="7">Target model damaged by Accursed must forfeit either its movement or action during its next activation.</td></tr>
<tr><td>FORTUNE</td><td>2</td><td>6</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>X</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="7">Target friendly Trollblood model/unit may re-roll failed attack rolls. Each attack roll may be re-rolled once.</td></tr>
<tr><td>DISSOLUTION</td><td>3</td><td>SELF</td><td>CTRL</td><td>-</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="7">When the spell is cast, enemy warbeasts and warjacks in Doomshaper's control area that have an enemy upkeep spell on them take d3 damage points. Each enemy warrior model/unit currently in Doomshaper's control area that has an enemy upkeep spell on it must pass a command check or forfeit its next activation. Enemy upkeep spells in Doomshaper's control area then expire.</td></tr>
<tr><td>RAMPAGER</td><td>2</td><td>10</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td></td><td>X</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="7">Target enemy warbeast must make an additional threshold check during its controller's next Maintenance Phase. If the check fails, the warbeast immediately frenzies and does not make a threshold check during the Control Phase. If the check succeeds, the warbeast may still have to make a threshold check during its controller's Control Phase as normal. This spell may be cast once per activation.</td></tr>
<tr><td>VEXATION</td><td>2</td><td>8</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>X</td><td>X</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="7">At the start of opponent's Activation Phase, Doomshaper's controller decides whether target enemy model/unit will activate first or last. Vexation cannot be cast on warcasters or warlocks.</td></tr>
</table>

Baldur the Stonecleaver

CIRCLE ORBOROS WARLOCK CHARACTER

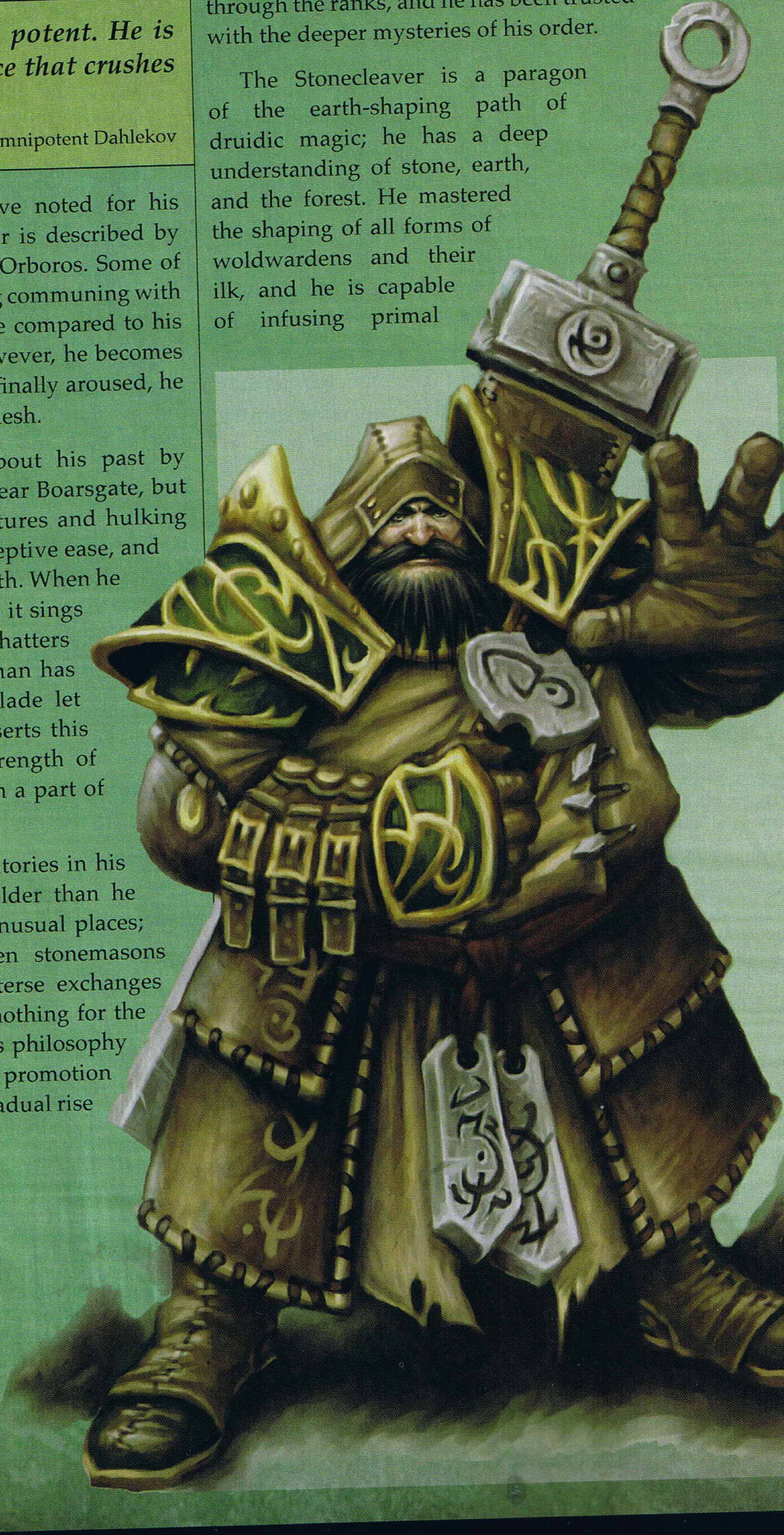
> ***I eagerly endorse Baldur's elevation to potent. He is the Rock of Orboros. Let him be the force that crushes the plague-blight.***
>
> —Omnipotent Dahlekov

A bastion of strength and resolve noted for his steadfast loyalty, Baldur Stonecleaver is described by other druidic leaders as the Rock of Orboros. Some of his peers jest that he has spent too long communing with mountains, for he is calm and serene compared to his more passionate peers. In battle, however, he becomes a different man. When his temper is finally aroused, he is an unstoppable juggernaut made flesh.

Baldur shrugs off questions about his past by joking he was born in a bear cave near Boarsgate, but there is a Khardic flavor to his features and hulking frame. He carries his mass with deceptive ease, and strength flows into him from the earth. When he unlimbers his massive stone sword, it sings through the air in his fingers and shatters anything it encounters. No other man has ever even been able to lift this blade let alone wield it in battle. Baldur asserts this ability has nothing to do with strength of limb and that the sword is as much a part of him as his arms.

He has overseen numerous territories in his tenure among the Circle and is older than he looks. Baldur also has friends in unusual places; he has shared lore with dwarven stonemasons and has decades ago conducted terse exchanges with the guardians of Ios. Caring nothing for the politics of man, Baldur reserves his philosophy to the shaping of stone. His recent promotion to potent continues his slow and gradual rise through the ranks, and he has been trusted with the deeper mysteries of his order.

The Stonecleaver is a paragon of the earth-shaping path of druidic magic; he has a deep understanding of stone, earth, and the forest. He mastered the shaping of all forms of woldwardens and their ilk, and he is capable of infusing primal



power into the scored runes covering each piece of stone. His thick fingers possess the skill and artistry of a sculptor, but his masterpieces spring to life and stride onto the battlefield to tear walls and beasts asunder. Baldur's magic allows forests to spring to life even in blighted places, and with these trees he can cross enormous distances to flank his enemies, attack from unexpected directions, and cleave them in two with his unstoppable sword.

The menace of Everblight's Legion weighs heavily on Baldur's mind even with his proven ability and new authority. Their unnatural blight warps all it touches and leeches away vital energies essential to druidic power. Since the rise of this threat, he has had difficulty sleeping more than a few hours at a time. He wakes each morning before sunrise either to work on a warden or muster for battle on the front line. He has spent considerable time patrolling the wilds of northern Khador, slicing into the forward tendrils of the encroaching Legion.

Baldur is also concerned with the disappointing rift with the trollkin. In better days he was a welcome guest among kriels of the Thornwood and the Scarsfell, but now they are bitter foes. The pragmatic Stonecleaver knows they cannot leave their flanks vulnerable and must protect centers of power from troll retaliatory strikes. Somehow despite all dire omens, Baldur remains at heart optimistic about the future. He stands as a beacon of energy and vitality among the doomsayers of his fellowship and insists no fight is lost until all will is lost.

SPECIAL RULES

BALDUR					CMD 8
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM
5	7	7	4	14	16

TRITUS		
SPECIAL	POW	P+S
Weight	7	14

FURY	6
DAMAGE	17
FIELD ALLOWANCE	C
VICTORY POINTS	5
POINT COST	65
BASE SIZE	SMALL

Feat: Broken Earth - For Baldur earth and stone are living things—the skin and bones of Orboros. Boulders spring from the ground, crevices pull apart, and rumbling earth makes every footstep perilous. No enemy can take a single step in his direction when the earth moves to intercede.

Enemy models cannot move into Baldur's control area during their controller's turn. During their controller's turn, enemy models currently in Baldur's control area cannot end their movement closer to Baldur than they started. Broken Earth lasts for one round.

BALDUR

Elemental Mastery - Friendly Elemental Constructs in Baldur's control area may charge or perform power attacks without being forced. Baldur may heal Elemental Constructs.

Forest Walker - While completely within a forest, Baldur may forfeit his movement to use Forest Walker. Remove Baldur from the forest and place him in a new location completely within a forest. Baldur's new location must have been completely within his control area prior to forfeiting his movement. There must be room for Baldur's base in the new location. Baldur cannot be targeted by free strikes while forest walking.

Pathfinder - Baldur ignores movement penalties from rough terrain and obstacles. Baldur may charge across rough terrain.

TRITUS

Weight of Stone - Models damaged by Tritus suffer –3 DEF, and their base SPD is reduced to 1 for one round.

SPELL	COST	RNG	AOE	POW	UP	OFF
EARTH'S BLESSING	2	6	-	-	X	
Target friendly Circle model/unit cannot be knocked down and gains Pathfinder. Models with Pathfinder ignore movement penalties from rough terrain and obstacles. Models with Pathfinder may charge, slam, and trample across rough terrain.						
EARTH SPIKES	3	10	3	13		X
When making Earth Spike attacks, ignore cover and elevation. On a critical hit, models in the AOE are knocked down.						
RAPID GROWTH	2	CTRL	5	-	X	
Place a 5" AOE template anywhere completely within Baldur's control area but not touching a model's base, an obstacle, or an obstruction. This template is a forest that stays on the table as long as upkeep is paid.						
STONE SKIN	2	6	-	-	X	
Target friendly Circle model/unit gains +2 STR and ARM but suffers -1 SPD and DEF.						

Thagrosh, Prophet of Everblight

LEGION OF EVERBLIGHT BLIGHTED OGRUN WARLOCK CHARACTER

Our doom has come. This abomination cannot be stopped. Should Nyssor fall to the dragon prophet, we doom the entire world to an endless blighted winter.

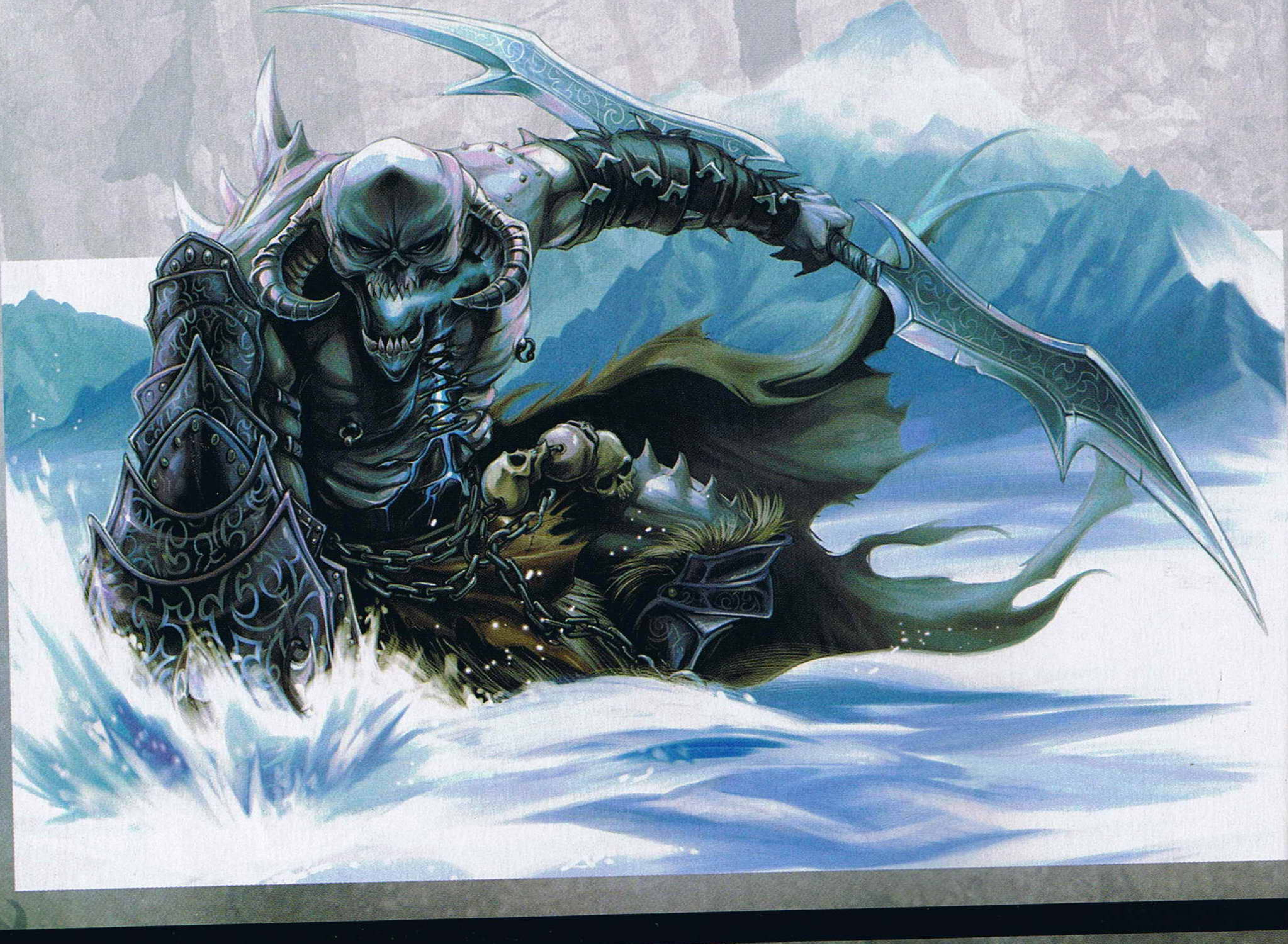
—Vaeril the Wise, Qyr-Aransor of the Fane of Nyssor, speaking to his priests

The annals of history will remember Thagrosh Hellborne as the abomination that unleashed the Legion of Everblight onto the world. He has undone one of the greatest victories of Ios and brought about the near annihilation of the Nyss. The blight he has unleashed spreads from the icy north down into the heart of the lands of man, and he strides at its vanguard as death made flesh.

Thagrosh has endured a harder life than most. Brigands from a Khadoran mining camp ransacked the village where he was born and enslaved every able-bodied ogrun. Thagrosh's formative years were spent under the lash, toiling at backbreaking labor in darkness and watching others die around him. This labor forged Thagrosh's strength and stoked his rage, and when one of his keepers carelessly let down his guard, Thagrosh choked him to death with his chains and escaped. He fled into the wilderness where he became a wanderer of the northern peaks and learned to survive by hunting and trapping.

Sometime later, fevered whispers and nightmare visions called to him and bid him to climb the tallest mountain of the north. Sleepless and barely conscious of what he was doing, Thagrosh climbed for days and dug into the ice with his bare hands. Numb to his bleeding fingers and shattered nails and on the verge of an eternal frozen slumber, he discovered the sealed repository of the athanc of Everblight.

In his first test of resolve, Thagrosh had to mutilate himself to accept the dragon's blessing. With a skinning knife he sliced open his chest and tore apart his own ribcage so he could drive the athanc into his heart. The athanc's generative power washed through him and transformed his body into a blighted and twisted vessel for an immortal power. He was no longer ogrun, but the Abomination—flesh and bones forever twisted and



transformed while his blood turned black and became a dragon's ichor. His mind has expanded far beyond his old self, and although in some sense his mind is still his own, he sometimes has difficulty divorcing his perspective from that of his dragon-god. The athanc has awakened an arcane magic in him never known by any ogrun, a powerful sorcery born of the dragon's blight mastery. Everblight is his patron, advisor, and god. Thagrosh is the prophet who speaks with the dragon's voice and embodies its will.

The first prophetic vision Everblight provided to Thagrosh revealed the resting place of Rapture, an ancient weapon of power. Millennia before, the dragon had this dire blade forged by the rune-masters of Morrdh for an ancient champion. The weapon was shaped to serve as a tool against Everblight's siblings and the Dragonfather, but it vanished in the fall of Morrdh and found its way to a forgotten tomb in the Nyschatha Mountains. Everblight's blood quenched its metal, and the dragon retained a connection to it. When Iosans took Everblight's athanc north, they passed near this tomb and awakened the dragon to its presence. Thagrosh's hand became the first to bear this weapon in two thousand years, and with it Thagrosh could divide Everblight's athanc without severing his mind. Thagrosh saw how he as Prophet would be the first of many to receive the blessing of the dragon-mind.

The Prophet of Everblight has put forth the dragon's schemes, descending upon the Nyss to shatter their old life and awaken a new destiny as the chosen of the dragon. He has initiated both Herald and Disciple to the blight, as well as other chosen, by dividing the athanc and giving his dragon master myriad warlocks from which to extend his will into the world. Able to wield the greatest blighted magic, he is a terror unequalled on Caen leaving the choking ash of blighted annihilation behind him.

SPECIAL RULES

Feat: Dark Revival - The Prophet of Everblight safeguards the largest portion of his master's athanc, and from its dark energies potent malignancy pumps through his veins—true draconic blood. As the singular blight of this blood, Thagrosh can pour new life into the spawn that have fallen in battle, letting them taste the dragon's blessing to cheat death. Revitalized they rejoin the battle as if freshly born. It is a sight that can make even the most brave enemy weep with despair.

Return one friendly Legion non-character warbeast of your choice to play, placing it anywhere completely within 3" of Thagrosh. There must be enough room for the warbeast's base. The warbeast cannot activate this turn.

THAGROSH

Athanc - After leaching, Thagrosh automatically gains one fury point if he has fewer fury points than his FURY.

Terror - Enemy models/units in melee range of Thagrosh and enemy models/units with Thagrosh in their melee range must pass a command check or flee.

THAGROSH					CMD 8
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM
5	9	7	5	14	15

BLIGHTED BREATH			
RNG	ROF	AOE	POW
SP	1	—	12

RAPTURE		
SPECIAL	POW	P+S
Multi	7	16

FURY	7
DAMAGE	18
FIELD ALLOWANCE	C
VICTORY POINTS	5
POINT COST	74
BASE SIZE	MEDIUM

RAPTURE

Eruption of Ash - If target model is destroyed by Rapture, center a 3" AOE cloud effect on it and then remove the model from play. The cloud effect remains on the table for one round. Enemy models in the AOE at the time it is put in play suffer a POW 12 damage roll. Enemy models moving into or ending their activation in the cloud suffer a POW 12 damage roll. Eruption of Ash damage rolls cannot be boosted.

Reach - 2" melee range.

SPELL	COST	RNG	AOE	POW	UP	OFF
DEATH SHROUD	3	SELF	CTRL	-		
While in Thagrosh's control area, models gain concealment and enemy models suffer –2 STR. Death Shroud lasts for one round.						
DRACONIC BLESSING	2	6	-	-	X	
Target friendly Legion model/unit gains +2 STR and Terror. Enemy models/units in melee range of a model with Terror and enemy models/units with a model with Terror in their melee range must pass a command check or flee.						
MUTAGENESIS	3	8	-	12		X
Target model destroyed by Mutagenesis is removed from play and may be replaced by Thagrosh. There must be room for Thagrosh's base. Thagrosh cannot be targeted by free strikes when replacing the destroyed model. Thagrosh cannot move after replacing another model. Mutagenesis may be cast once per activation.						
OBLITERATION	4	10	4	15		X
Summoning the full might of Everblight's wrath, Thagrosh blasts apart the earth.						
TWISTED FORM	2	8	-	-		X
Target warbeast suffers –2 FURY. In addition, it loses Regenerate, cannot be healed, and cannot have damage transferred to it. Twisted Form lasts for one round. This spell may be cast once per activation.						

ARCHDOMINA MAKEDA

SKORNE WARLOCK CHARACTER

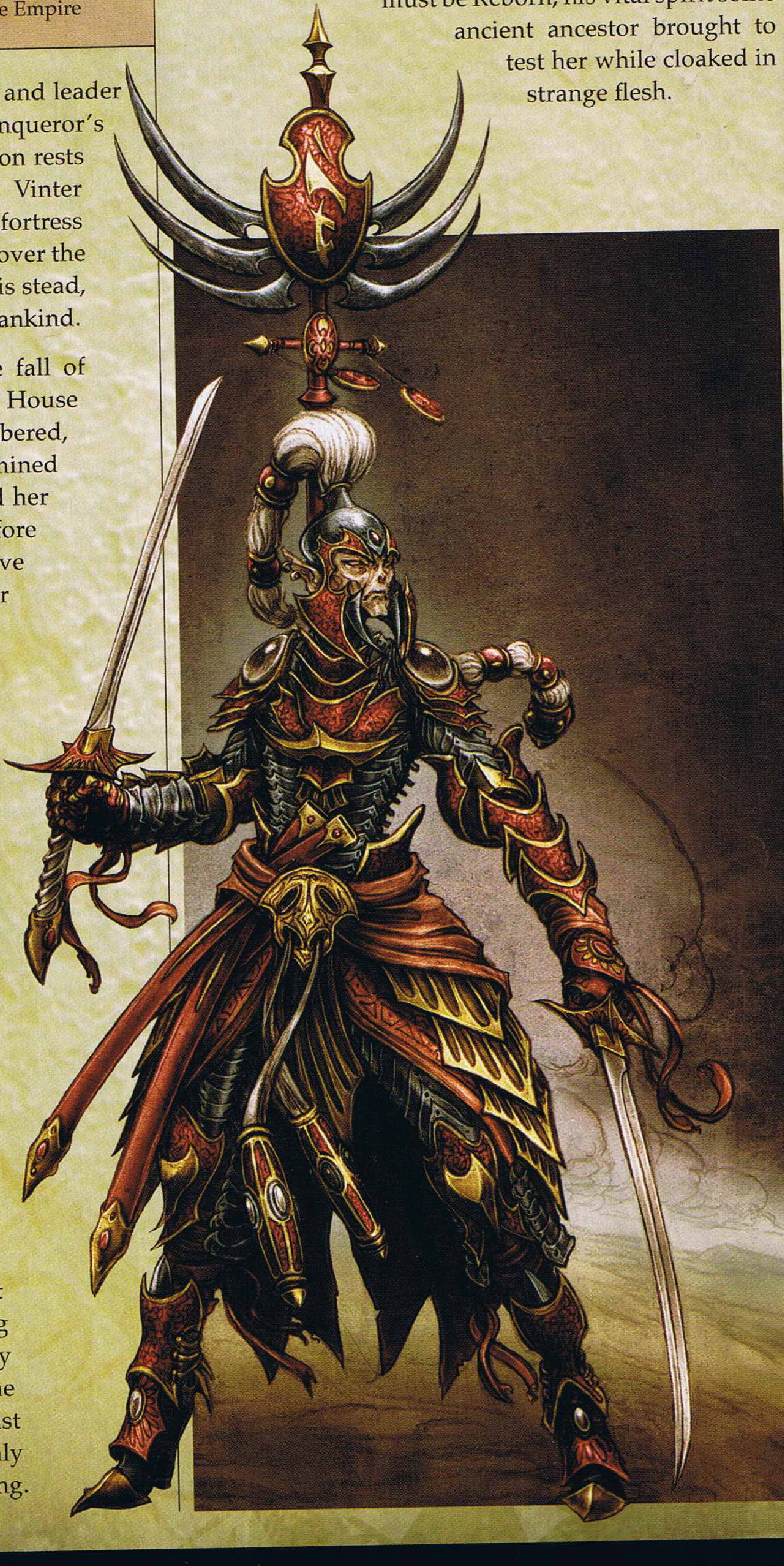
> ***Were she not willing to serve another, I would count her my equal.***
>
> —Vinter Raelthorne IV, Supreme Archdominar of the Skorne Empire

As archdomina of the Western Reaches and leader of the skorne army, Makeda is the Conqueror's sword. The success or failure of the invasion rests on her capable and ruthless shoulders. Vinter made the difficult decision to stay at his fortress in the Stormlands to maintain iron control over the Skorne Empire, chose Makeda to lead in his stead, and sent her west against the nations of mankind.

During the First Unification after the fall of Halaak, the Conqueror marched north on House Balaash. Even enormously outnumbered, Makeda stood steadfast against him determined to fight to the last. Three times she rallied her army, cutting swaths from his ranks before Vinter forced her back. Her iron resolve refused to wane, and she pushed her soldiers beyond the limits of death. The domina decided her only chance was to slay the Conqueror and force his army to rout. She charged and broke through his line with her greatest war-bred titans and basilisks and her remaining cataphracts. She urged them forward and forced them into a frenzy of bloodshed.

The Conqueror and Makeda met in the center of battle in an epic clash of blades. Vinter had never fought an adversary so strong, and he did not yet comprehend the nature of the domina's link to her enslaved beasts. The blood they spilled turned the desert's baked earth to mud. Makeda withstood a rain of lethal blows by shunting the damage to nearby titans and basilisks instead. Fueled by powers over life and death, Makeda gave Vinter pause, and he almost faltered. She too was amazed, having never expended herself so completely against a foe without crushing him. She could not understand how he could boast such skill and mad resolve drawn only from an invincible wellspring of his being.

At last Vinter disarmed Makeda. All of her beasts had been slain and her soldiers brought to ruin. It was at this moment Makeda had the realization that this man must be Reborn, his vital spirit some ancient ancestor brought to test her while cloaked in strange flesh.



Broken and exhausted but not crushed, the domina stood calmly and awaited the death blow. To the astonishment of his army, the Conqueror walked away after speaking the words that would give her renewed purpose: "Another day and it would be me at your blade. Pick up your swords and fight in my name."

Makeda spent the years of Vinter's first reign rebuilding the strength of her house. When he took his probing expedition in 602 AR to capture Corvis, he left Makeda in Halaak to coordinate and organize the massive army that was to follow and serve as reinforcements for his drive on Caspia. Vinter had tasked all of the house leaders to muster these forces and to work on the great bridge-fortress that he intended would provide a permanent crossing of the Abyss. Unfortunately the Conqueror had not anticipated that his dominars were plotting for his overthrow. They were awaiting his departure to spring to action, hoping to return Halaak to its old ways and break apart the unified government.

The betrayers occupied the skorne capital and targeted Makeda for assassination. She gathered her loyal vassals and fought her way to her northern stronghold and sealed the gates. The siege of House Balaash was a test of her skill that required her to maximize her limited resources and continually fend off a besieging army vastly outnumbering her own. She endured against impossible odds until Vinter returned to break the siege.

Now Makeda serves the Conqueror by leading his invasion. Fused into her heavy armor and twin ancestral blades, the souls of her most revered House Balaash ancestors loan her strength. She leads an army larger than has ever been gathered together by the skorne and she will unleash them in a multi-pronged attack against the human lands. She will create permanent strongholds for the eventual occupation of all of western Immoren. With each step she takes, she expands the border of the Skorne Empire.

SPECIAL RULES

Feat: Walking Death - In service of the Archdomina, even death does not release a soldier from his obligations. Makeda can force the living spirit to linger and fight even after the heart has ceased to beat and the lungs can no longer breath.

Friendly Skorne troopers destroyed in Makeda's control area this round return to play during her controller's next Maintenance Phase if Makeda has not been destroyed or removed from play. A returned model must be placed in her control area within 3" of another model in its unit. A model cannot be returned to play if all models in its original unit have been destroyed or removed from play. A returned model cannot move during its activation this turn. A returned model causes its unit to lose benefits or effects that it received from the original destruction of the returned model. A model returned to play is reduced to one wound.

MAKEDA

Command Authority - Makeda may issue any order to a unit that its original leader or officer could issue.

MAKEDA					CMD 9
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM
6	7	7	4	15	16

SWORD OF BAALASH		
SPECIAL	POW	P+S
—	5	12

SWORD OF BAALASH		
SPECIAL	POW	P+S
—	5	12

FURY	6
DAMAGE	16
FIELD ALLOWANCE	C
VICTORY POINTS	5
POINT COST	64
BASE SIZE	SMALL

Dauntless Aura - Friendly Skorne models/units in Makeda's command range never flee and immediately rally.

Vivisection - Makeda gains a +1 cumulative bonus to melee damage rolls each time she makes a successful melee attack roll targeting an enemy model this turn, including the first.

<table>
<tr><th>SPELL</th><th>COST</th><th>RNG</th><th>AOE</th><th>POW</th><th>UP</th><th>OFF</th></tr>
<tr><td>CARNAGE</td><td>3</td><td>SELF</td><td>CTRL</td><td>-</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="7">Friendly Skorne models attacking enemy models in Makeda's control area gain +2 to melee attack rolls. Carnage lasts for one round.</td></tr>
<tr><td>DEFENDER'S WARD</td><td>2</td><td>6</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>X</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="7">Models in target friendly Skorne unit gain +1 DEF and ARM. While in tight formation, models in the affected unit instead gain +2 DEF and ARM.</td></tr>
<tr><td>SAVAGERY</td><td>2</td><td>6</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>X</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="7">Target friendly Skorne non-warlock model/unit may run without being ordered or forced to do so. Affected models may also make melee attacks after running.</td></tr>
<tr><td>THE LASH</td><td>3</td><td>10</td><td>3</td><td>13</td><td></td><td>X</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="7">Models/units damaged by The Lash suffer −2 CMD and THR for one round.</td></tr>
</table>

SPREAD THIN

Narrative by Doug Seacat,
Scenario by Jason Soles and Duncan Huffman

Kaya shook her head, trying to concentrate. The air held a strange vibrancy, a smell in the air like that which followed lightning, and the colors of the landscape were particularly bright, as if a storm had left the air startlingly clear. The ground trembled below her feet, and there was a hint of sound beyond hearing, felt as a pressure on her chest. Those gathered behind her had initiated a great druidic ceremony, its power spreading outward like ripples on a lake.

She felt some resentment about being tasked to watch the perimeter rather than being included in the ceremony. Today was a rare astronomical conjunction which enabled the druids to harmonize several truly ancient standing stones, inactive for decades. Her selection as guardian was an honor a sign of trust, particularly as the region was unstable and interlopers were a possibility. Nonetheless, she wished she could participate directly.

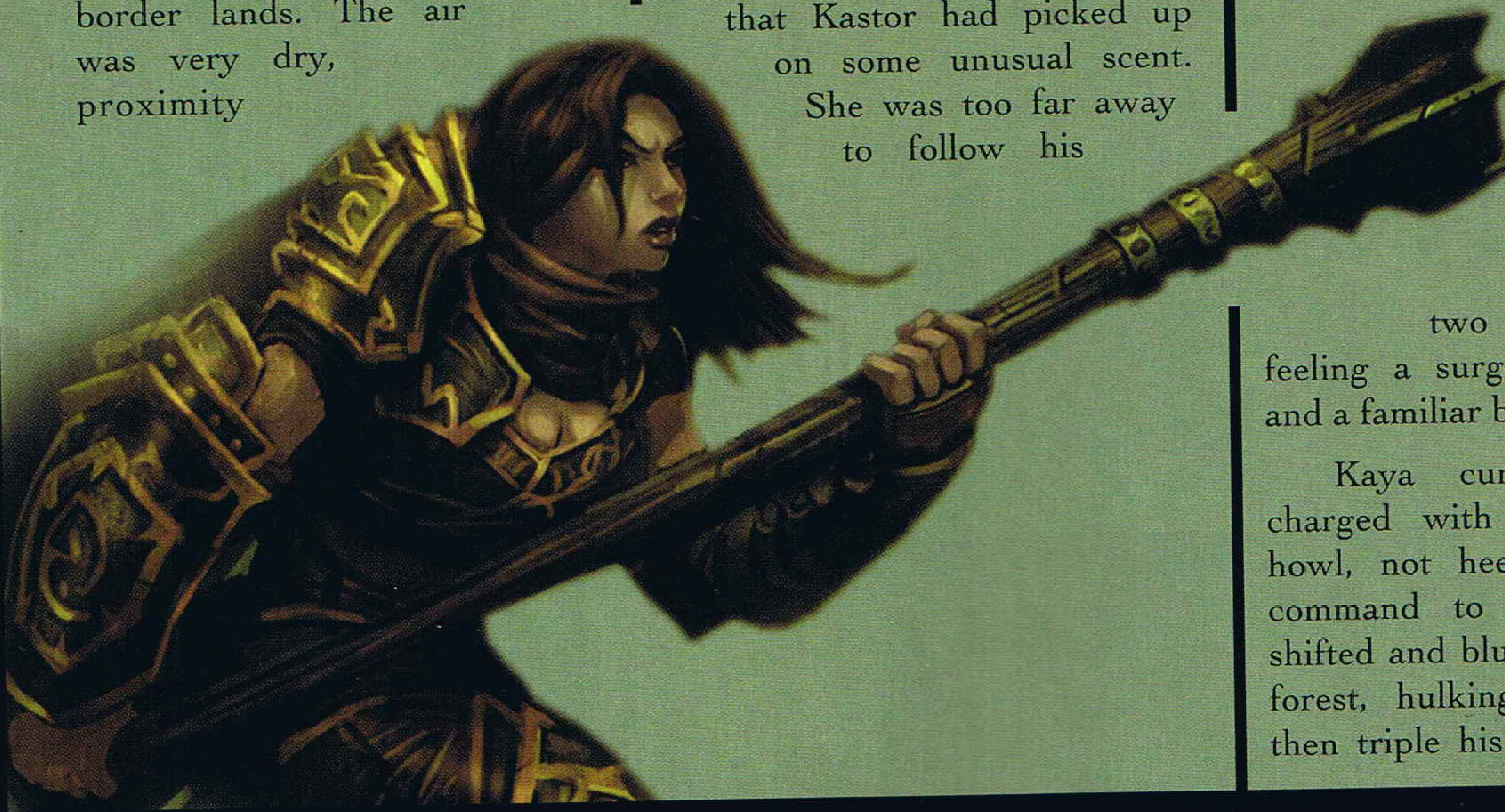
The landscape here north of the Hawksmire River among the foothills extending west from Mount Shyleth Breen was unfamiliar and vaguely disquieting. This was a natural border lands. The air was very dry, proximity to the Bloodstone Marches apparent in the bands of reddish clay across the nearby hills, the stunted and twisted trees. Behind her was a grove perfectly sheltered between gently sloping hills, fed by a stream which eventually joined the Hawksmire. This had long been a fulcrum of natural power, one the Circle guarded resolutely.

Her small Argus pack was spread along the perimeter, scenting for danger. A warpwolf named Kastor also joined her patrol. She had fought beside him for several months but still did not feel comfortable speaking to him when he reverted to human form, as his mind was caught somewhere between animal and man, disjointed and often irrational. In battle he became an unstoppable creature of fearsome instinct and they fought together seamlessly.

She frowned as she sensed that Kastor had picked up on some unusual scent. She was too far away to follow his thoughts, but moved in that direction. She let loose a mental call to the Argus and gathered a cloak of mist to hide her from prying eyes.

Master Tormentor Morghoul was scouting north of the skorne main advance, seeking a good resupply point. It seemed to him the Archdomina had made a mistake trying to break through south of the great lake, where they had encountered fierce trollkin resistance. For this reason he was investigating the lay of the land further north, seeing if he could find a location which could serve as a watch point or to supply a flanking cohort.

He was accompanied by two cyclopes. Some distance behind him was a lumbering Titan, but he had become weary of waiting for its advance, and had impatiently outpaced it. As he climbed down the incline toward the trees a movement caught his eye, a hulking shadow. With a wave of his hand he beckoned forward the two one-eyed brutes, feeling a surge of exhilaration and a familiar battle itch.



Kaya cursed as Kastor charged with a bloodcurdling howl, not heeding her mental command to wait. His body shifted and blurred out from the forest, hulking to double and then triple his former mass, fur

~A Warpack Scenario~

sprouting along twisted limbs while muscles rippled and horned spikes protruded from flesh.

The objects of his rage were three heavily armored figures, each attired in red and gold. Two bore visored one-eyed helmets and great curved swords, their frames considerably larger than the slender third whose hands were sheathed in clawed gloves. The warpwolf hurled himself into one of the larger creatures, his claws a violent blur. After latching on with both claws, Kastor lunged forward with slavering fangs to chomp its neck, and ripped his head back with a spray of blood.

The creature only staggered and did not fall, its heavy helm deflecting the brunt of the attack. The other cyclops tried to intervene, chopping downward with its great curved blade. Kaya had seen Kastor fight before—she knew him to be hyperaware and nimble, yet the cyclops seemed to anticipate his evasion, shifting its stance in mid-swing to inflict a grievous wound on the warpwolf. Meanwhile the slender third figure swiftly closed to finish him off.

Kaya cursed under her breath. Her Argus raced to her, but were still fifty yards behind; they would be too late. She reached across the space between her and Kastor, opening a portal. In one step she appeared near the warpwolf and behind the strange masked figure. She realized he was taller than she expected, only dwarfed in comparison to the two cyclopes. There was something disturbing about the graceful way he moved, but it was too late to second-guess her attack.

She swept her wooden staff with all the strength she could muster, cracking into the legs of the red-garbed figure with a report like gunfire, toppling him to the ground. Thinking him a normal soldier, she smugly swung again, intending a finishing blow. The staff connected with another brutal crack, but there was no sign of injury. One of the cyclops battling the warpwolf grunted and backed up a step instead; Kaya sensed the injury had been deflected, which meant she faced a foe of greater power than she had anticipated.

He smiled up at her with strangely pointed teeth and then leapt nimbly to his feet, his clawed hands flicking toward her in a sequence of attacks so blindingly fast her eyes couldn't follow. She tried to intercept with her staff, but her efforts felt clumsy next to his speed. Pain exploded along each of her sides and in both of her legs. She stumbled back, eyes wide. Each slice had not penetrated deeply, yet she had been skewered a half dozen times. Her foe's metal-tipped fingers dripped with fresh blood.

From the corner of her eye she saw something massive and terrible charging toward her across the dusty ground—a great and armored beast with curved tusks. She could almost feel the ground shake beneath each tread as it let loose a trumpeting bellow.

She gritted her teeth and drew on the strength of her beasts as the two Argus raced past her with a howl. Unleashing her own battle cry she hurled this gathered power straight into her grinning foe—a ghostly fang of raw spirit which exploded into his chest and made him stumble back. She raised her staff, a determined gleam in her eye, vowing nothing would live to get past her and disrupt the ceremony she was trusted to guard.

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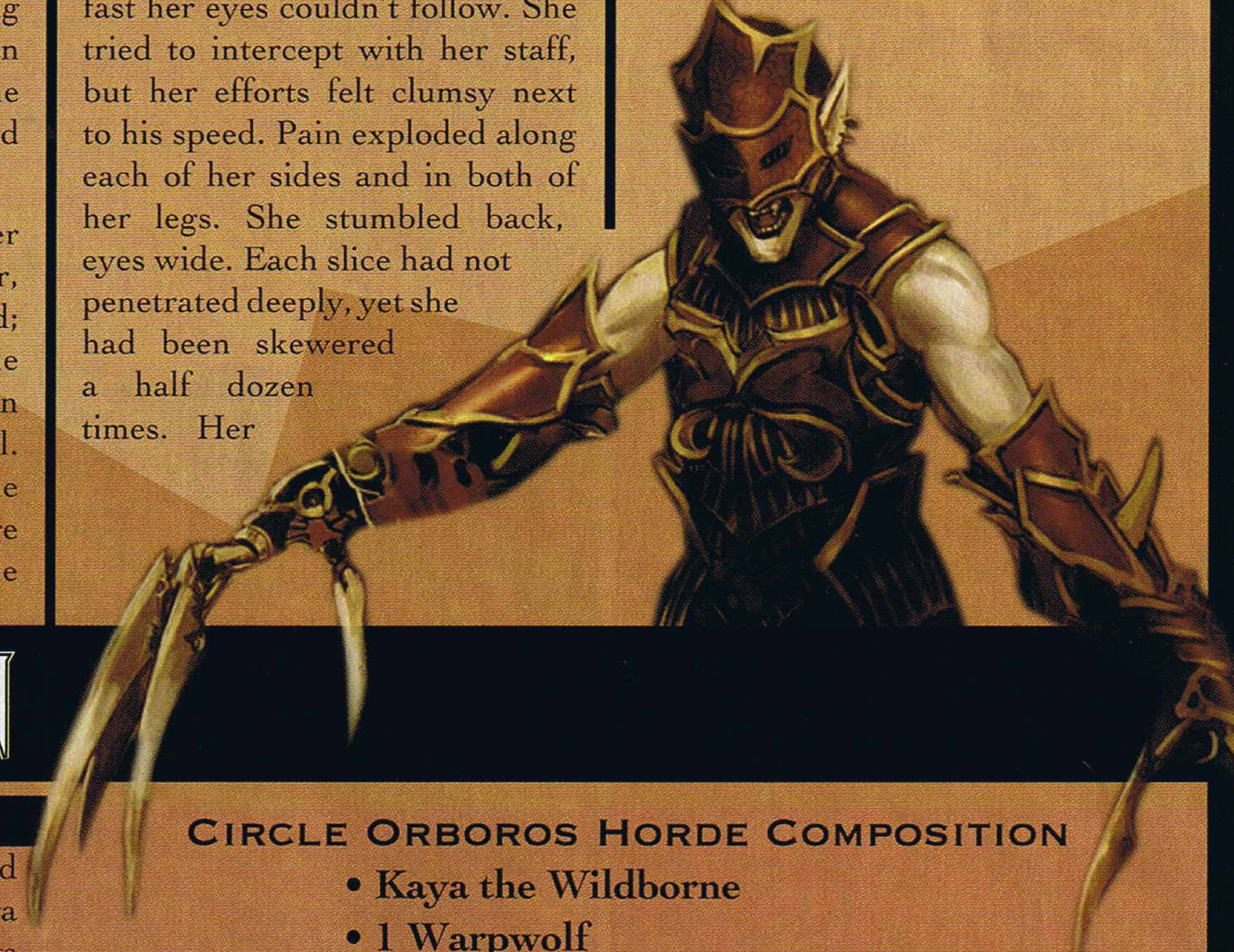


SPREAD THIN

DESCRIPTION

Her pack dispersed to guard the ceremonial grounds, Kaya is out of reach of her warbeasts when Morghoul crashes the party. Luckily for her, Morghoul's Titan is lagging behind his master. She must finish the Skorne, and quick, before they can gather the strength to break her defenses.

CIRCLE ORBOROS HORDE COMPOSITION

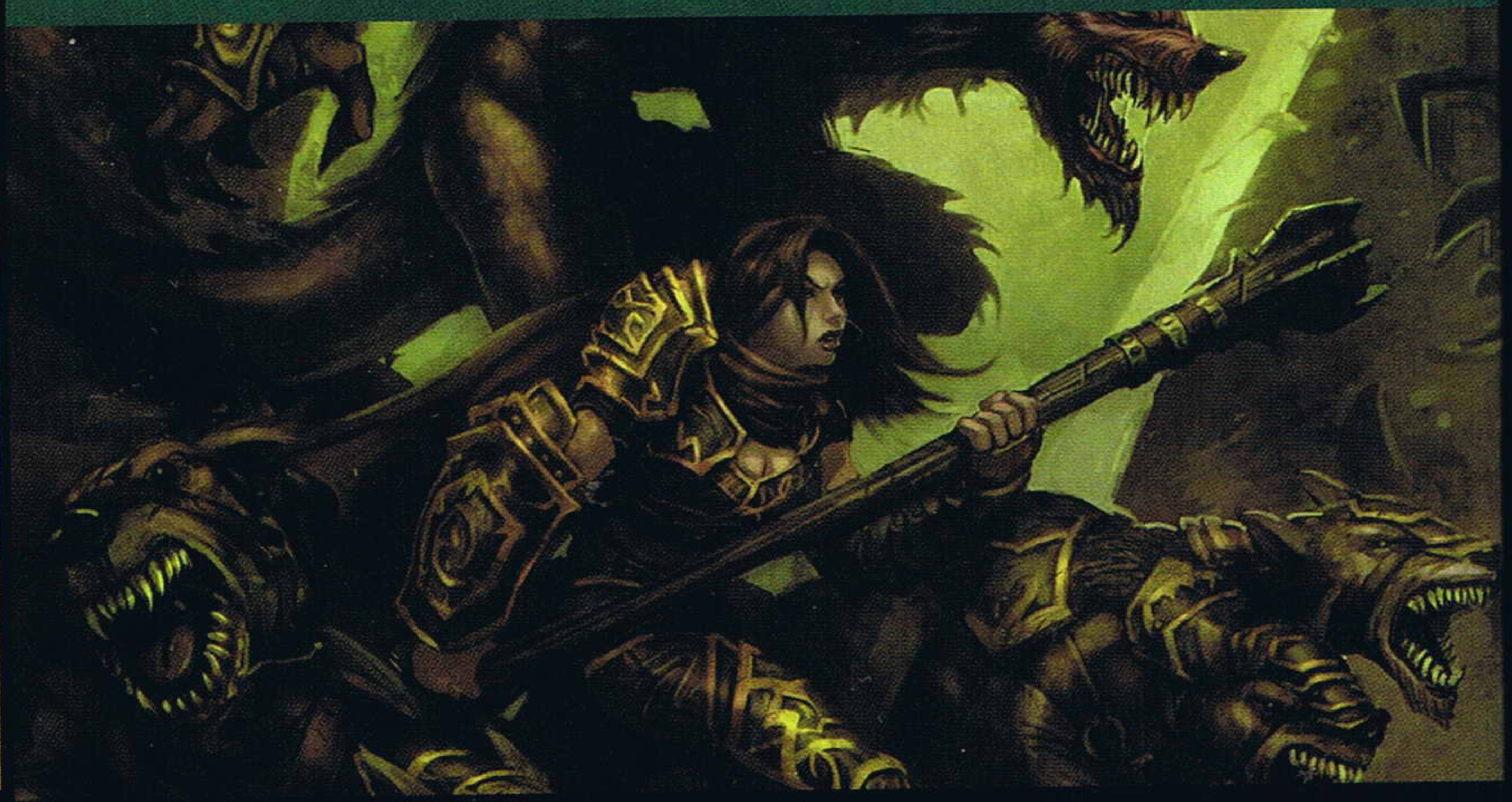
- **Kaya the Wildborne**
- **1 Warpwolf**
- **2 Argus**

SKORNE HORDE COMPOSITION

- **Master Tormentor Morghoul**
- **1 Titan Gladiator**
- **2 Cyclops Savages**

SPECIAL RULES

Slowpoke – The Titan Gladiator is not deployed at the start of the game. It is placed on the table at the beginning of the Skorne player's third turn. When put into play, place the Titan within 3" of the back edge of the Skorne deployment zone. The Titan may activate normally this turn.



SET-UP & BEGINNING

See map. Spread Thin is intended to be played on a 48" x 48" table.

Players then take turns each placing four (4) terrain features. Terrain features cannot be placed within 3" of another terrain feature or table edge. A player cannot place terrain features in his opponent's deployment zone.

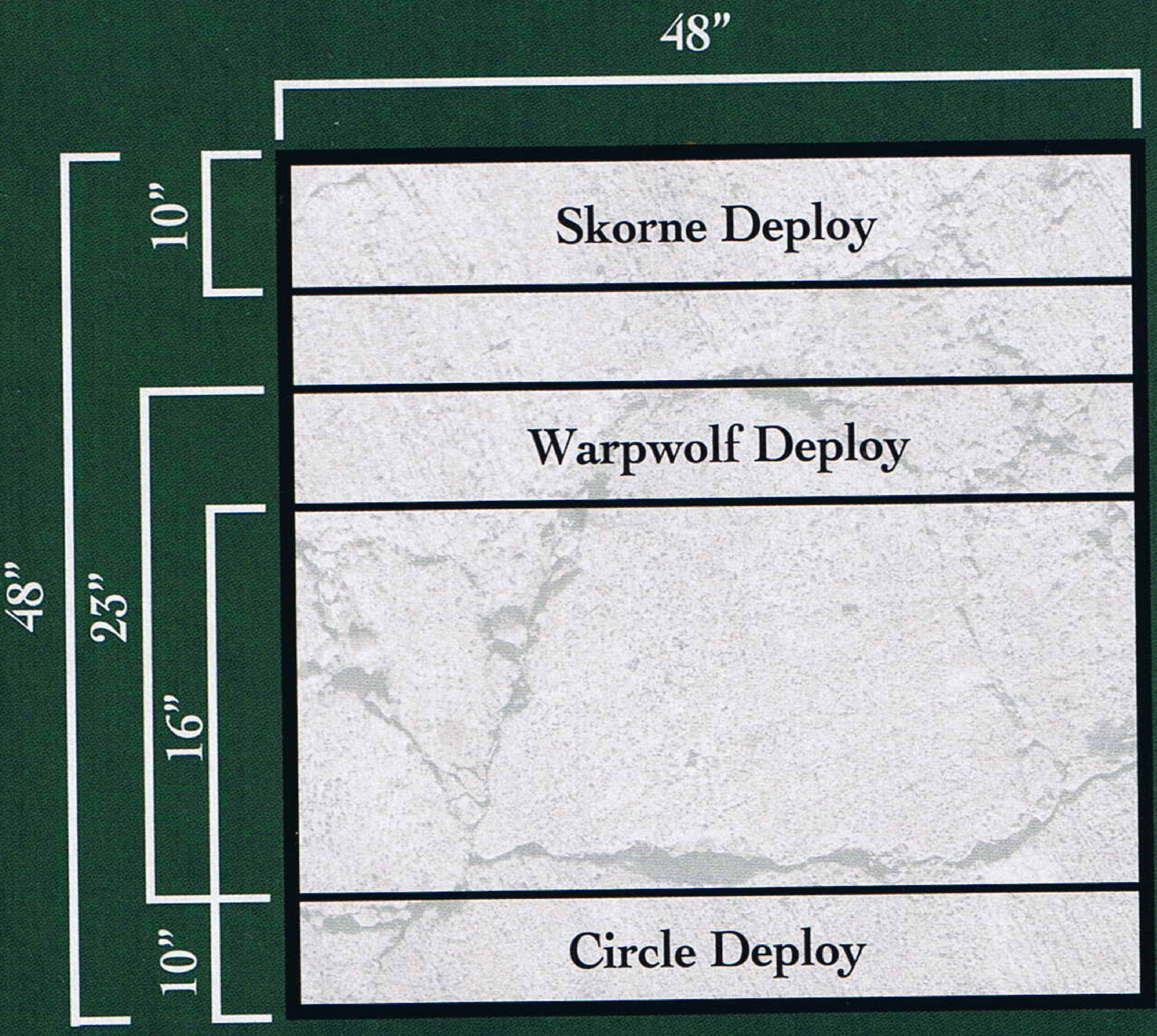
The Circle player deploys the Warpwolf first, placing it anywhere at least 16" but not more than 23" away from his deployment zone.

The Skorne player then deploys Morghoul and the 2 Cyclops Savages in his deployment zone.

Finally, the Circle player deploys Kaya, placing her within his deployment zone. He then places the 2 Argus within his deployment zone at least 18" from Kaya.

The Skorne player takes first turn.

SKORNE VS. CIRCLE



VICTORY CONDITIONS

A player wins when his opponent's warlock has been destroyed.

LYING IN WAIT

Narrative by Doug Seacat,
Scenario by Jason Soles and Duncan Huffman

Lylyth never felt more alive than when stalking her prey, stepping through the landscape with practiced grace, even in unfamiliar terrain. She knew her master enjoyed this hunt as much as she did, able to touch the world vicariously with her flesh serving as intermediary.

She was Everblight's Herald, sent afield from the regions of his blighted influence. She did not need her eyes to see, and her armored helmet and visor covered the upper portion of her face, allowing her to extend her senses by the special gift granted by her master. By this sight the world had special clarity and she could focus on her target to the exclusion of all distractions. Her current prey was easy to follow, but the challenge was remaining unnoticed.

Communing with Everblight was an ever-changing experience. He was always present, yet at times distracted, His attention focused elsewhere. She called to His attention now, speaking a mental whisper as intimate as thought. “Now. He is alone.”

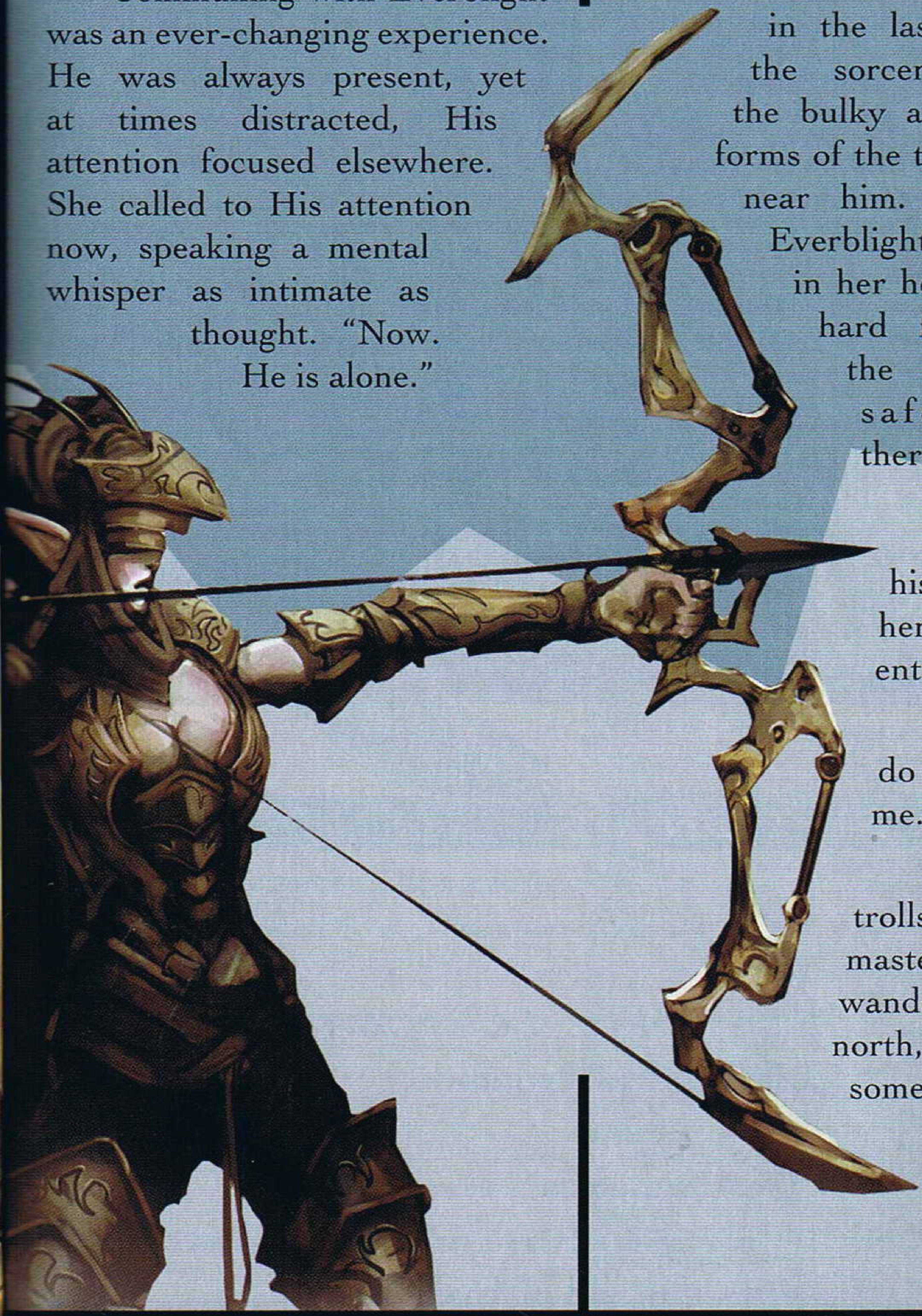
She had been following the albino trollkin for days in this swampy forest, watching as he visited villages of his people, always escorted. The last of his armored and muscular companions had remained behind in the last village as the sorcerer rejoined the bulky and towering forms of the trolls he kept near him. Lylyth felt Everblight's attention in her heart where a hard fragment of the athanc was safeguarded; there was a brief surge of heat, and his words in her mind, “Not entirely alone.”

“The trolls do not worry me.”

The three trolls and their master were wandering further north, along some game trail which suffered by their passing. These were tracks even a child could follow. Lylyth sensed her master's keen interest in the albino's weapon, an axe he sensed possessed tremendous power. “You cannot take him alone.” There was no scorn or mockery in her master's tone, just a simple and quick assessment. “I have called my blood to you.”

This was not a region they had penetrated, but she had brought a small group of spawn to accompany her scouting, keeping them at a distance to prevent their being noticed by her quarry. Now at the dragon's bidding, they crossed the intervening terrain with rabid haste. The Carnivean lurched through the trees, tossing the smaller dragonspawn aside, its legs tearing through underbrush unhindered. Lylyth watched as the albino reacted to the noise, hissing orders to his trolls to split them into the underbrush on either side of the trail. Lylyth's lips twitched in an amused smile at this. They had no idea what had come among them.

She felt the heat of Everblight's presence as his thoughts carried the weight of command. “I would see that weapon in use, but do not linger if the battle turns...”



~A WARPACK SCENARIO~

Her lips compressed. “I will deliver the axe to you.”

“We shall see.”

She let the Carnivean draw their attention in its noisy push through the woods. Meanwhile she had the shredders move around to the flank. She silently pulled an arrow and nocked it to Hellsinger, the sound of her heart pounding in her ears. This was always a sublime moment, the breath before bloodshed.

Few sights were as delightful as the expression of an enemy seeing a Carnivean for the first time. The albino’s eyes widened in disbelief to behold the great reptilian beast breaking through the forest. The troll with an oversized axe gave a bellow and leapt forward to engage, immediately engulfed in a wash of incendiary ash from the Carnivean’s mouth, sizzling and burning along its flesh. Hardly pausing, the great spawn continued its forward stride, smashing through an intervening row of brush to grab the troll and begin tearing it to bloody pieces.

The other spear-bearing trolls raised them to hurl at the monstrous creature in their midst. Lylyth sighted along her bow and let an arrow fly, a second one already nocked to the string as the first one sunk deep into the ribs of the furthest troll. Her three shredders followed the marked scent of her arrow, racing from the forest to beset the same creature. Their sightless attention was unwavering as tooth-filled mouths unhinged to feast. That troll howled in anger and turned to confront the diminutive spawn, thrusting its spear to impale one even as they bit for its legs.

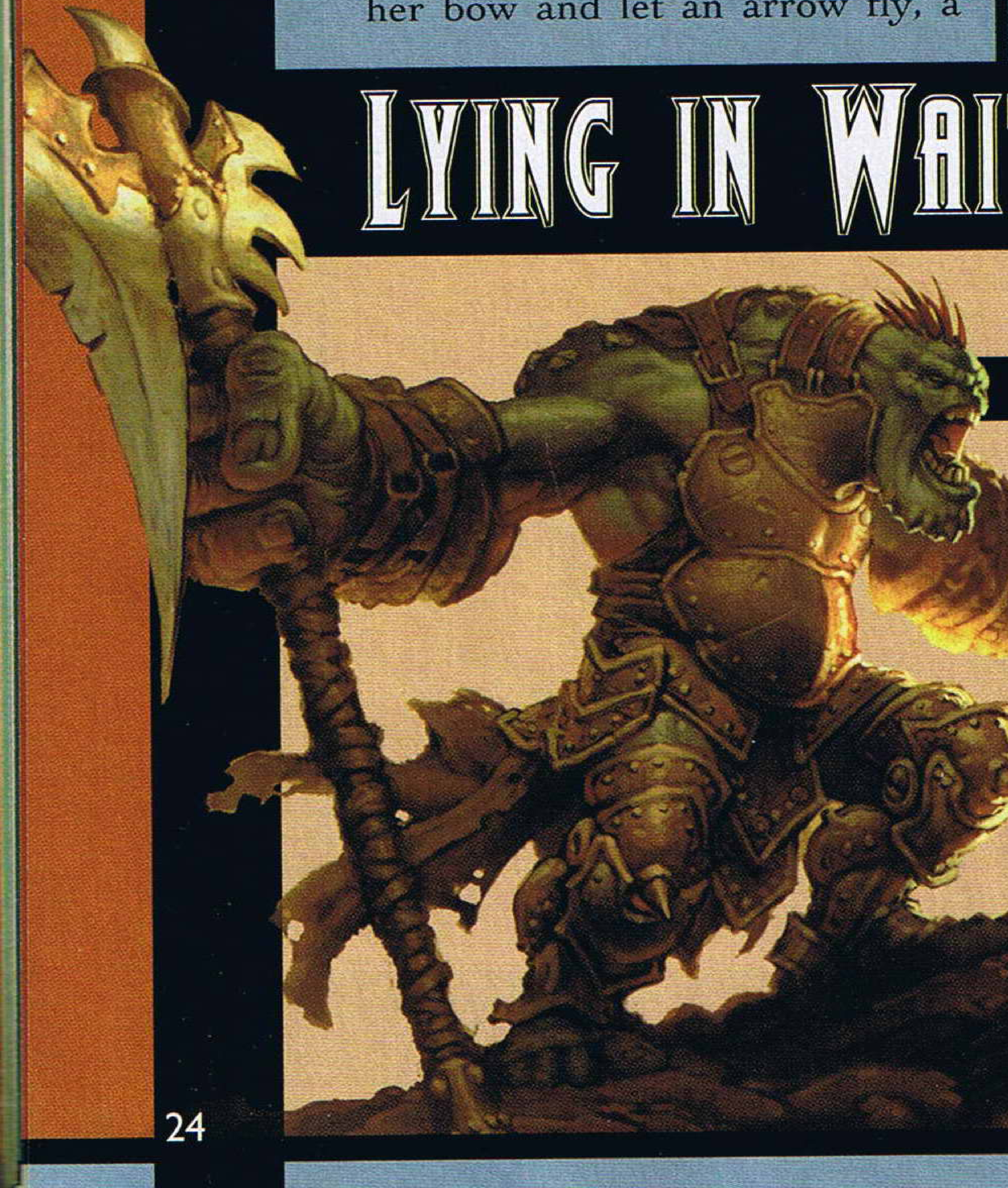
Lylyth moved swiftly and gracefully after firing, smiling in satisfaction to see that the two trolls were already almost undone. This fight would be over soon, and that great axe would be her gift to her master.

The albino pointed to her and bellowed a command at the remaining spear-wielding troll. She sensed him draw power to himself and release it upon the troll, bolstering its innate abilities. The creature turned to follow her movements, and she felt a brief tremor of dreaded foresight. Even with a moment’s anticipation and leaping to the side, she was not quite fast enough. The length of wood tipped by heavy iron slammed into her side, lifting her from the ground and hurling her back to be pinned against a nearby tree.

Her vision blurred with an explosion of pain, but she fought the urge to collapse, drawing on the strength of the dragon to yank the spear loose and cast it aside. She brought Hellsinger up to bear on the grim faced albino trollkin who came toward her now, teeth set and great axe pulled back. Beside him was the troll which had impaled her, a second oversized spear drawn from a quiver at its back. She screamed in her mind to the Carnivean, her previously confident grin become a grimace of hatred.

◆

LYING IN WAIT



DESCRIPTION

Madrak and his war party are aware that something is tracking them. Lylyth is not surprised however and positions her warbeasts to ambush the ambushers.

TROLLBLOOD HORDE COMPOSITION

- Chief Madrak Ironhide
- 1 Troll Axer
- 2 Troll Impalers

LEGION OF EVERBLIGHT HORDE COMPOSITIO

- Lylyth, Herald of Everblight
- 1 Carnivean
- 4 Shredders

SPECIAL RULES

None.

SET-UP & BEGINNING

See map. Lying in Wait is intended to be played on a 48″ x 48″ table.

Players then take turns each placing five (5) terrain features. Terrain features cannot be placed within 3″ of another terrain feature or table edge. A player cannot place terrain features in his opponent's deployment zone.

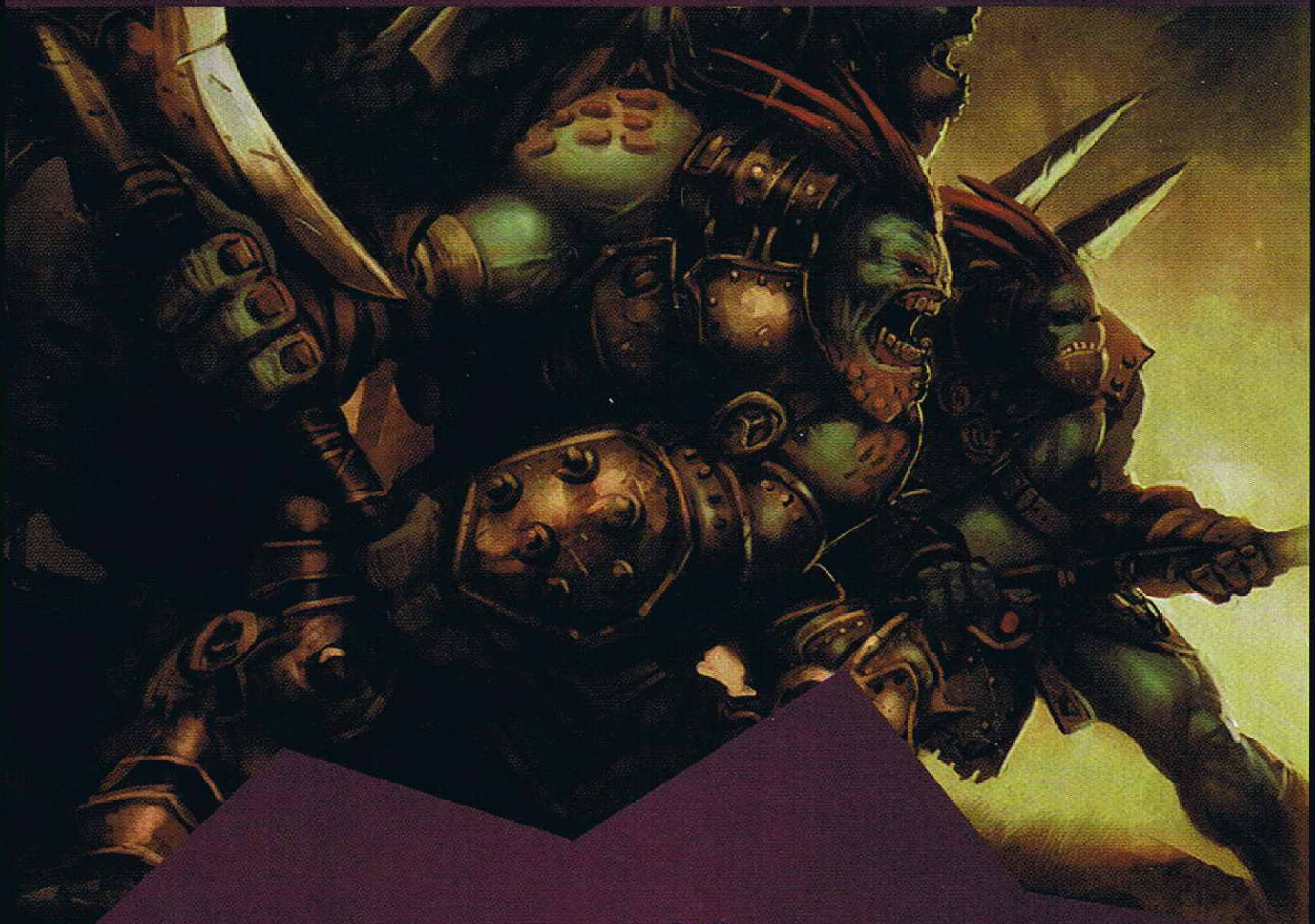
The Trollblood player deploys his forces first, placing them anywhere within 6″ of the center of the table.

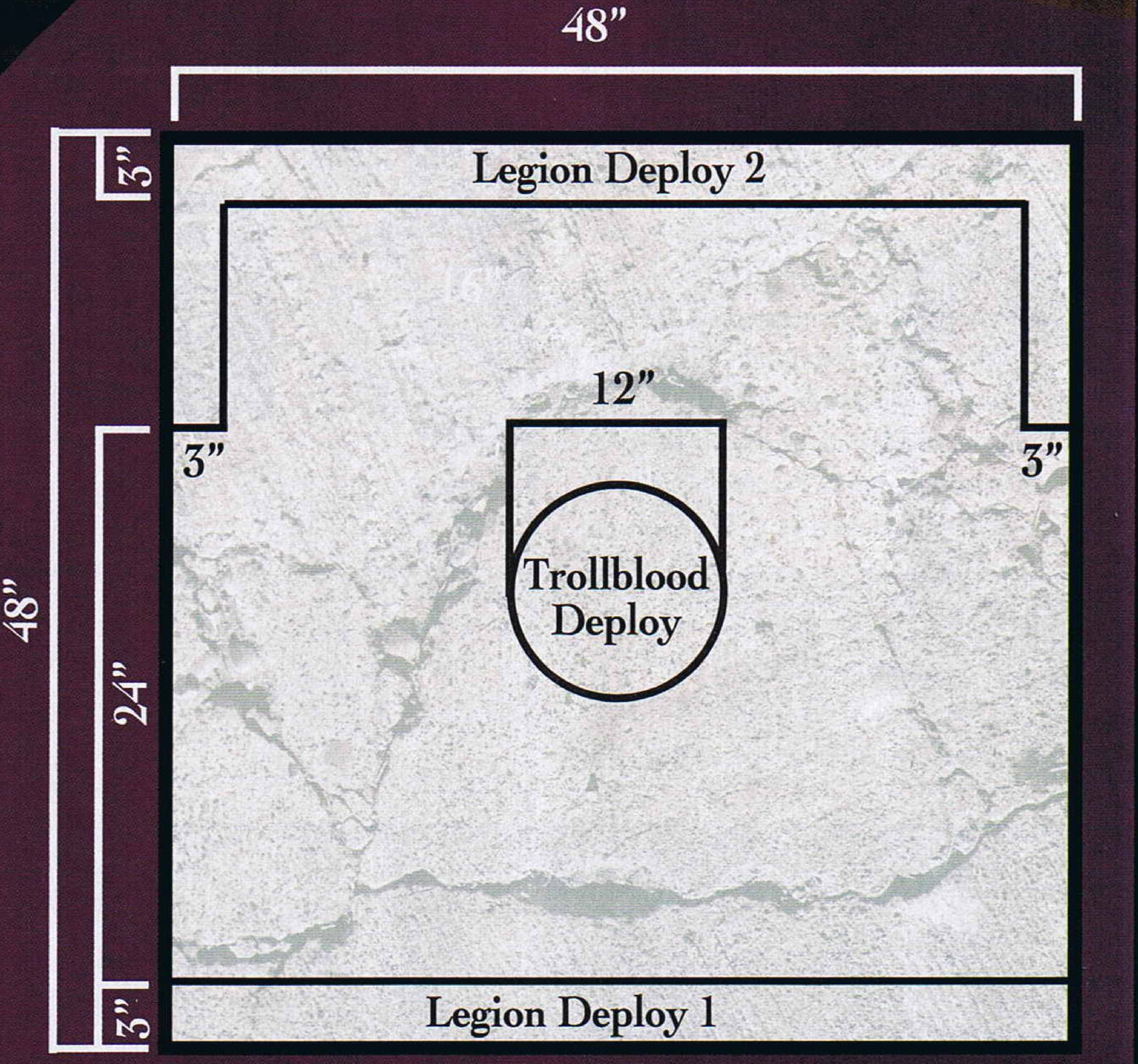
The Legion player then places Lylyth within Legion Deployment Zone 1. The Carnivean and 4 Shredders are then placed within Legion Deployment Zone 2.

The Legion player takes the first turn.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

A player wins when his opponent's warlock has been destroyed.





LEGION VS. TROLLBLOOD

COMPETITIVE WARMACHINE SCENARIOS

Scenarios By: Jason Soles and **Matt Wilson**
Additional Development: **Dan Brandt, Rob Stoddard**, and **Duncan Huffman**

Here at No Quarter Magazine, we pack as many creative scenarios and unique ways to play WARMACHINE into each issue as we can. Most of these are focused on new and unconventional strategies and deployments that don't lend themselves to strictly competitive play.

These next three scenarios go the other direction. These three are fully intended for a more competitive play style. No kooky deployments, no tricky extra models, no trains, wagons, or pirates. These three are "mano-a-mano" beat-downs; fully balanced to test your skills and find out who the best general in the room really is.

> *"Victory cannot be gained through strength of arms and strategy alone; a general must be meticulously prepared and infinitely adaptable. Know the land as you know yourself, strike without hesitation, and be prepared to offset any tactical disadvantage with overwhelming numbers. The ultimate purpose of war is victory; absolute victory at any cost."*
>
> *- Kommandant Gurvaldt Irusk, Conquest: How to Fully Subjugate Your Enemy.*

DESIGNER NOTES

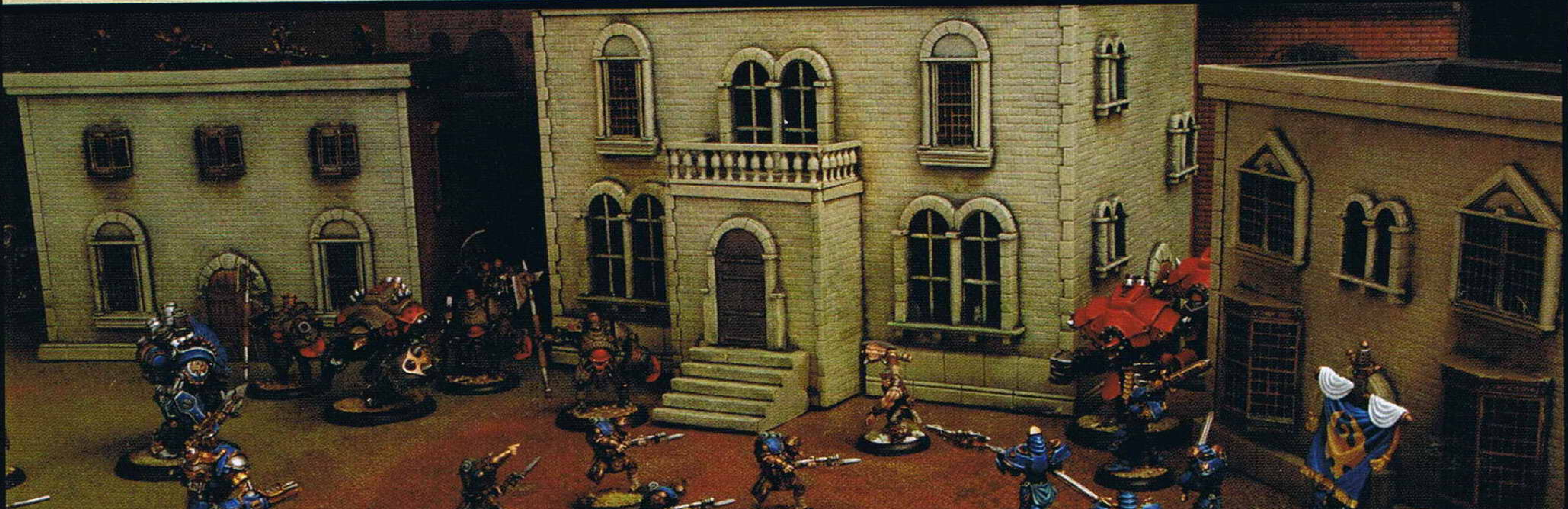
All of the following scenarios are played on 4' x 4' surfaces with 10" deployment zones.

KILLING FIELD

> *"Victory can be measured both in terms of ground gained and casualties inflicted."*
>
> *—Major Markus 'Siege' Brisbane*

DESCRIPTION

Killing Field is a desperate struggle between two armies to seize control of the battlefield by either entrenching itself on the center line or by inflicting crippling losses on the opposition.



SPECIAL RULES

Players score Control Points by holding the points marked on the middle of the table. A model holds the point if it begins its controlling player's maintenance phase with its base overlapping a point marker. Only one model may hold the point. Wrecked or inert warjacks cannot hold the point. A player gains one (1) control point for each point marker held. The first player score seven (7) Control Points wins the game.

SET UP

Before the start of the game, place three markers in the middle of the table, one at the center and two more 8" from the edges of the table.

Players then take turns each placing four (4) terrain features. Terrain features cannot by placed within 3" of another terrain feature, the middle of the table, or table edge.

BEGINNING

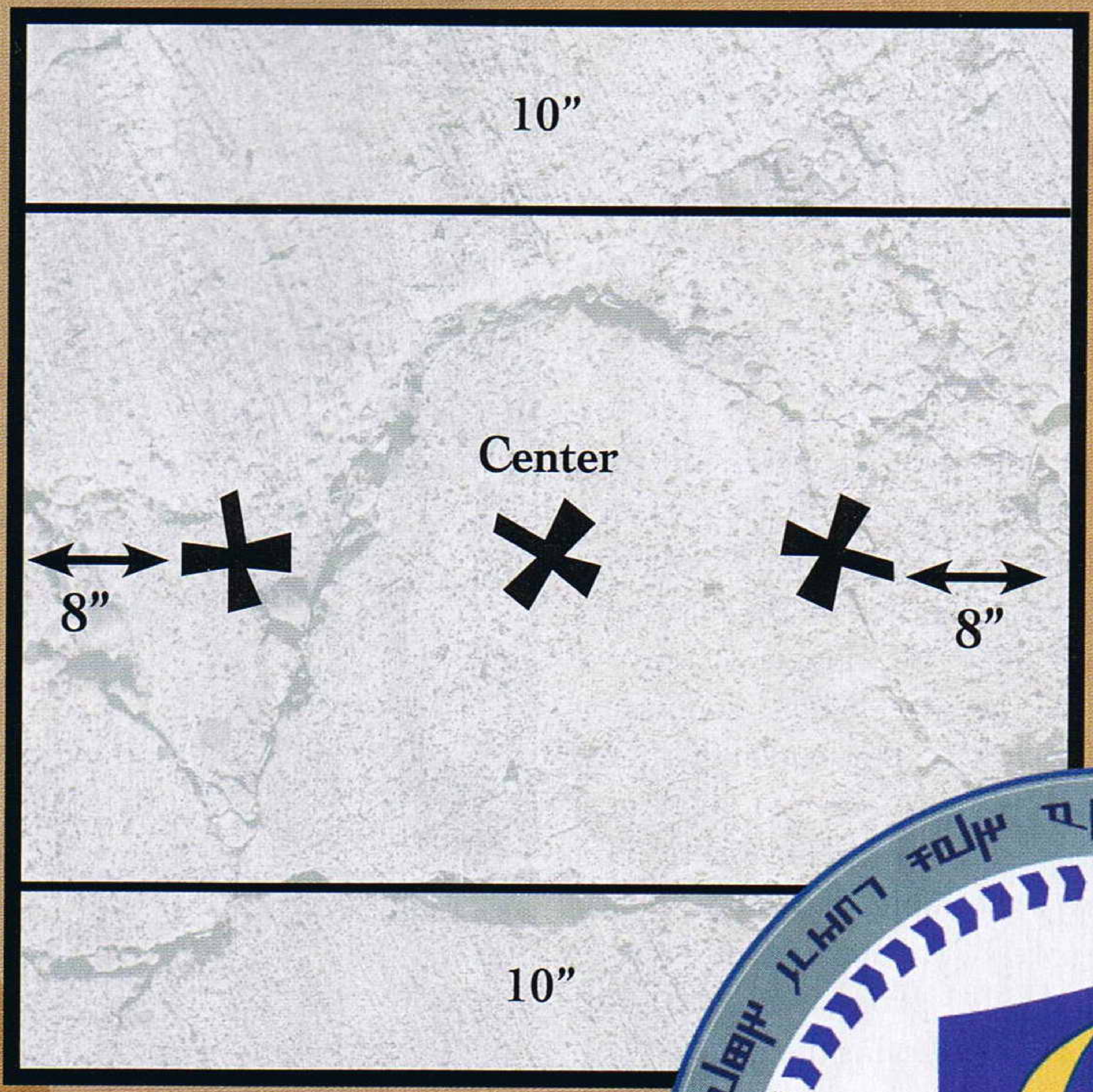
At the start of the game, each player rolls a d6 and the higher roller chooses who goes first. The first player gets his choice of deployment zones and takes the first turn. Players deploy their forces up to 10" from the rear table edge of their deployment zone.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The first player to score seven (7) Control Points wins the game.

If the game ends before one player has won, the player with the most Control Points wins. In case of tie, players compare victory points. When comparing victory points at the end of the game, a player gains one (1) additional victory point for each enemy unit left on the table that has lost half or more of its starting number of troops. The player with the most victory points wins the game.

KILLING FIELD SCENARIO



POSSESSION

"I have no idea what that is, but I know that if they want it – we need to keep it..."

— Trencher Sergeant William "Blue Billy" Teal

DESCRIPTION

Both forces are racing for an item in the center of the table. Although you do not know its function, your opponent is attempting to recover it at all costs. Don't let it leave the field in his hands.

SPECIAL RULES

A warcaster ending its movement in base contact with the package may make special action to pick it up. The warcaster drops the package if it becomes incorporeal, charges, runs, or is moved by any means other than advancing. If the warcaster drops the package, is destroyed, or is removed from play, place the marker representing the package at the model's current location.

SET UP

Before the start of the game, place a marker representing the package in the center of the table.

Players then take turns each placing four (4) terrain features. Terrain features cannot by placed within 3" of another terrain feature, the package, or table edge.

BEGINNING

At the start of the game, each player rolls a d6 and the higher roller chooses who goes first. The first player gets his choice of deployment zones and takes the first turn. Players deploy their forces up to 10" from the rear table edge of their deployment zone.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The first player to get a friendly model carrying the package to the rear table edge of his deployment zone wins the game.

If the game ends before one player has won, the player with the package closest to his deployment zone wins. In case of tie, and there should not be, players compare victory points. When comparing victory points at the end of the game, a player gains one (1) additional victory point for each enemy unit left on the table that has lost half or more of its starting number of troops. The player with the most victory points wins the game.

SABOTAGE

"Bombs we got – but gods bless you if you can find a sorry sod to run them...." — Theo Morecreek, Devil Dog Mercenary

DESCRIPTION

You must deliver an explosive device into your opponent's deployment zone. Your runner must reach the enemy alive before your opponent's runner detonates his device in your lines.

SPECIAL RULES

Before the start of the game, each player chooses a model that begins play in his deployment zone to carry his explosive. A model carrying an explosive cannot run or make any actions. If the model carrying an explosive moves or is moved by any means other than advancing, is destroyed, or is removed from play, place a marker representing the explosive at the model's last location. A friendly model ending its movement in base contact with the explosive may make a special action to pick up the explosive. Incorporeal models cannot pick up the explosive.

Players then take turns each placing four (4) terrain features. Terrain features cannot by placed within 3" of another terrain feature or table edge.

BEGINNING

At the start of the game, each player rolls a d6 and the higher roller chooses who goes first. The first player gets his choice of deployment zones and takes the first turn. Players deploy their forces up to 10" from the rear table edge of their deployment zone.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The first player to begin his Maintenance Phase with a friendly model carrying the explosive in his opponent's deployment zone wins the game.

If the game ends before one player has won, the player with his bomb closest to his opponent's deployment zone wins. In case of tie, and there should not be, players compare victory points. When comparing victory points at the end of the game, a player gains one (1) additional victory point for each enemy unit left on the table that has lost half or more of its starting number of troops. The player with the most victory points wins the game

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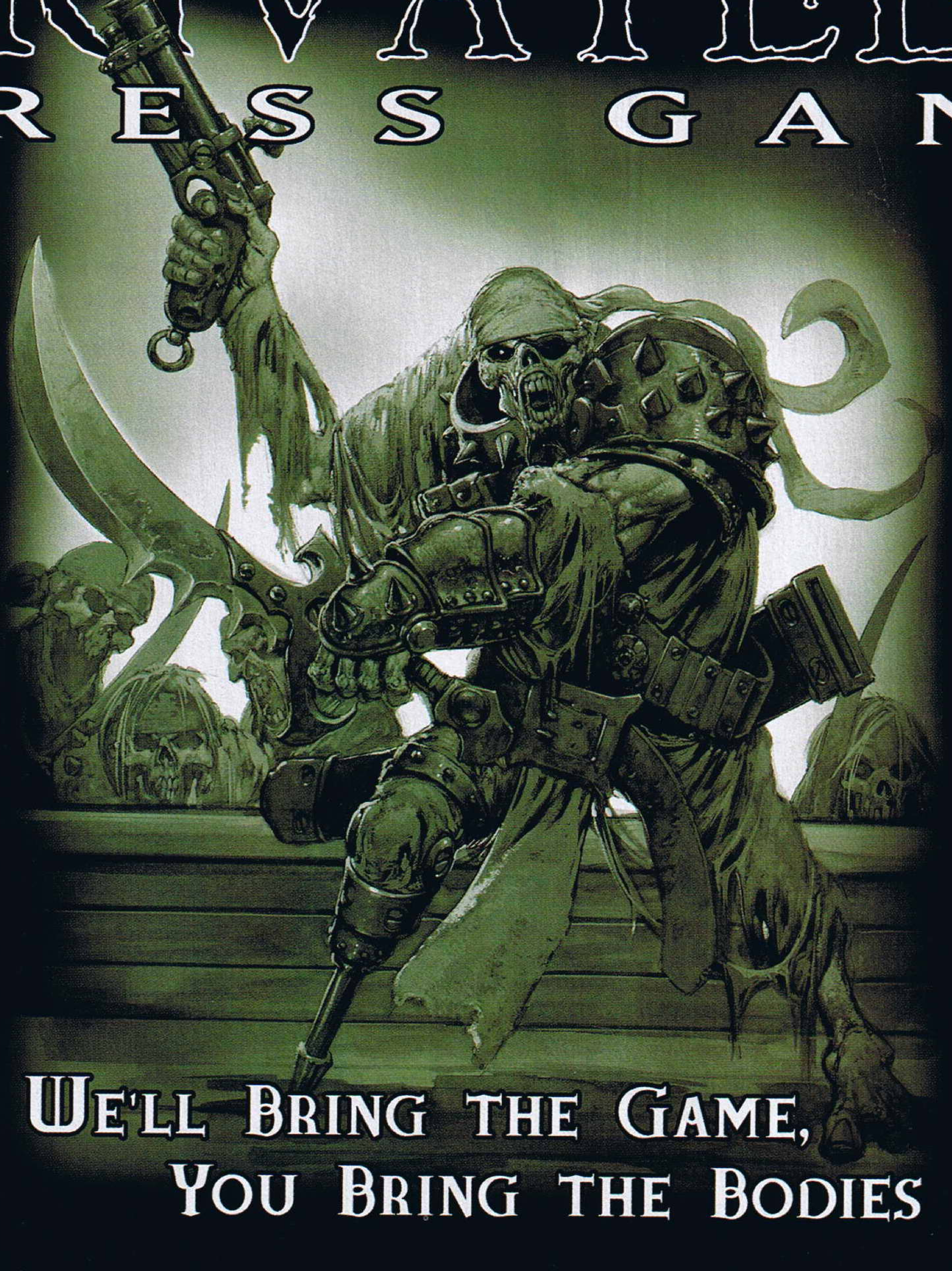
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BOND OF BROTHERS

Written by Doug Seacat - Art by Leonard Boyarsky, Chippy, Brian Snoddy, and Daryl Mandrayk

606 AR, the Glimmerwood

Chief Madrak Ironhide listened to the reports of Belkord, a trollkin who had spent considerable time scouting at the periphery of the lands they had recently claimed. Belkord was an older kin, just starting to show his years. Like Ironhide he was an albino, born with skin bleached of pigment and inheritor to the powers of sorcery. The two could not look more different, as Belkord was thin, his muscles lean and wiry, standing almost a half foot shorter than Madrak.

From birth Madrak had been taller more stout than most albinos of his species, bearing himself with the brawn of a warrior and able to stand eye-to-eye with kriel champions. Upon his neck was a heavy necklace festooned with almost a hundred metal rune-cast plates, a legacy of sacred ancestral wards he bore as a reminder of his responsibilities. Once worn by all kriel chiefs, the custom had been slowly abandoned and Madrak knew of no others who still wore them, only himself and his father before him. The weighty necklace pinched his skin in a dozen places, a weight on his shoulders that he allowed himself to remove only when retiring for sleep. Each of his ancestors had added another warding plate to its length, chained together as an unbroken whole. Such wards were now worn in small sets as a protective adornment by sorcerers or shamans—those who dealt with or manipulated supernatural forces, and never in such numbers.

The burden of his ancestors seemed particularly heavy as Ironhide took council with Belkord, tasked with keeping tabs on enemy movements, collecting the reports of pygs and wilderness-wise trollkin. Recently attacks had been brutal, as skorne invaders from across the eastern sands beset them in periodic waves. There was now a strange calm, and Madrak did not trust it.

Belkord was saying, "The pygs sent out to the hills report no movement. The foe has pulled back entirely to their tents and forts further out in the dunes. They wait for something."

Madrak sighed, tracing a finger along the scroll-tube at his waist, one of several holding scrolls of power rubbed from krielstones in the Thornwood. He missed his forest home, his village where he had grown to maturity, now abandoned. They had rebuilt here in the southern Glimmerwood, but it was not the same. Worse ground, worse trees, worse hunting. An onslaught of determined enemies. "How long will they wait?"

Belkord shrugged his pale shoulders, his eyes watery and troubled. "This is different than other times. I think their supplies have run low—this was a large withdrawal."

"Maybe they gave up, decided to try another way?"

Belkord considered the idea, but shook his head. "I am sure they will be back. They regroup."

Madrak paced, stopping to look out from his half-built hall on the village. Even late at night there was no end to activity, all of his people come together to make this a secure place. Kargess, his own mate, was out there, working with them, her hands adept at the stonemason's art and a skilled carpenter as well. She had slept little these last few weeks. Nothing permanent would be made here, only temporary shelter. Defenses, earthworks, walls for cover, outward towers for sentries, wooden huts and houses for rest and recovery. Not true homes; this was not the land they would settle and call their own.

"The trolls listen to you in battle. Go, we can endure without you for a couple weeks. Just do not linger long in that stinking city."

"I will have no better time than this. I must go to Caspia." He turned back to his friend, seeing uncertainty, though the older sorcerer kept his eyes lowered in respect. Madrak added, "I dislike leaving now. I do not want to be away if the fight renews, but I must go now if ever."

Belkord nodded, "Do as you must. I agree this is the time. We will be busy making defenses here and to the east." He gave a small smile. "You are a poor laborer, we will not miss you."

Madrak had been in ill-humor, but Belkord always found a way to amuse him. "The trolls listen to me," he protested. They could never have erected defenses so quickly without the aid of the pure-blood trolls they had brought out of the Thornwood.

"The trolls listen to you in battle. Go, we can endure without you for a couple weeks. Just do not linger long in that stinking city."

Madrak clasped his shoulder and strode from the hall to find his mate and tell her the news. Belkord called after him, "Take chiefs Horthol and Pokrul with you."

His course took him past a fresh line of graves near the village's impromptu shrine to Dhunia, each topped by a small stone cairn. Too many dead, many fallen in the last bloody battle before the recent calm. As tough and indomitable as his people were, there were limits.

As he walked, he pulled a thin chain of metal from one of the pouches at his waist, gold with links too fine and delicate for any trollkin to wear. Hung upon this were three thick coins also of gold, inscribed with fine detail he would have to squint to discern. One displayed the face of some unfamiliar human woman, and on the other side a sword surrounded by flame. The second bore a familiar swan. On the third was a stone keep covered in thorny vines above a bridge. Looking at their untarnished surfaces brought the memory back to him.

580 AR, Thornwood Forest

Madrak had journeyed far from his kriel, ostensibly on the hunt but he was testing himself against the forest. In recent months he had discovered he had a rare talent to connect with the minds of trolls. It was a gift he knew the kriel valued, but those who had it more often arose among the shamans.

Madrak had kept this talent a secret, unsure how his father would react to it. The chief had been getting older, and had a temper. He had been well past his prime when he'd sired Madrak, whose mother had been presumed infertile until he was born at last. His father's health had begun to fail these last few years, losing the natural trollkin resilience as mortality exerted its inexorable pull. This made Madrak increasingly aware of the hope resting on him as the sole heir of the bloodline. Taking time to master this skill could be seen as a distraction from his duties.

He explored the forest alone, well beyond areas he felt comfortable. The dense underbrush and ancient gnarled trees made it impossible to watch his surroundings, and the forest was alive with distracting sounds.

Madrak followed a tickling in his mind which meant a wild full-blood troll was nearby. His only exposure to their breed had been in his village, among tamed trolls who helped the community, carrying logs, lifting heavy stones, and other labors. They disliked such tasks even more than the trollkin, as for them the only things of interest were eating and sleeping.

This one's thoughts were raw, primal, and bloodthirsty. Madrak had no specific intent except to draw close to the troll and see if he could gain its trust, if it would listen to him. This was dangerous, but he felt confident, particularly once the troll had feasted and was no longer driven solely by hunger.

Across his empathic link he felt a sudden violent sensation, a rending tearing, and a sense of primal triumph. He could feel the kill, the delight as the troll brought down a fat deer, sinking teeth into flesh, tearing off raw meat and feeling a spray of hot blood.

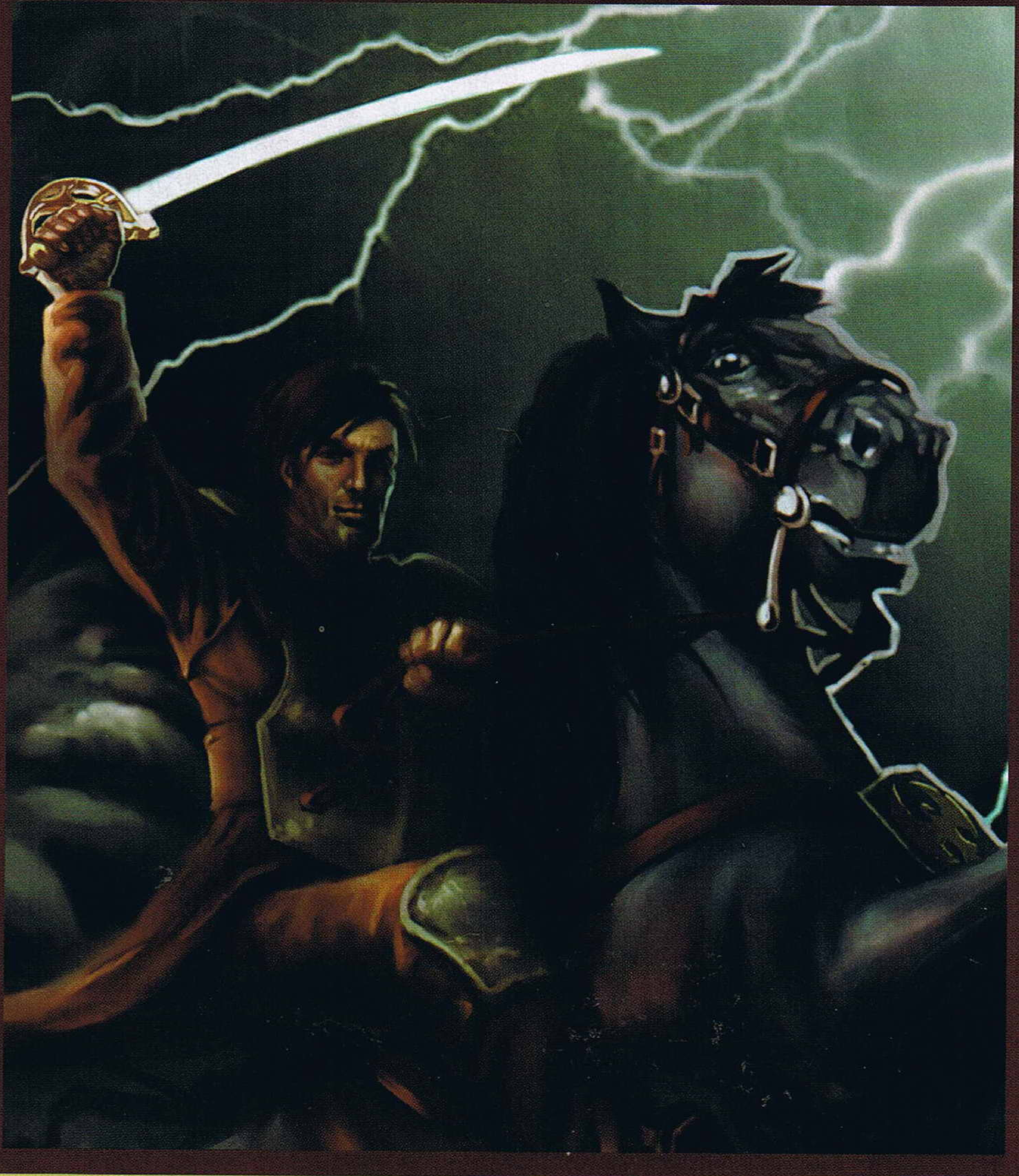
Madrak shook off the sensation and crept through the brush into a clearing to get a good look. The deer should suffice, too large for one feast, even for so gluttonous a creature. The troll was feasting next to a stream so he could wash down his repast with great gulps of fresh water. The deer had been sipping at its surface when surprised by the troll's leap, its instincts had failed it and it had frozen in fear.

The troll looked up from its feeding, steaming blood dripping down its face, looking in Madrak's direction. The young trollkin prepared to exert his will on the creature, until he caught a glimmer of something else, unexpected, in its thoughts. The smell of something bad, a scent that meant danger.

Madrak had only this moment of warning. He tumbled forward as a long-handled axe splintered bark from the tree next to him. He rolled into the small glade and brought up his own thicker-bladed and shorter hafted axe. He could feel the troll's thoughts still connected to his own, and there was no menace there, rather a sense of not unwelcome kinship.

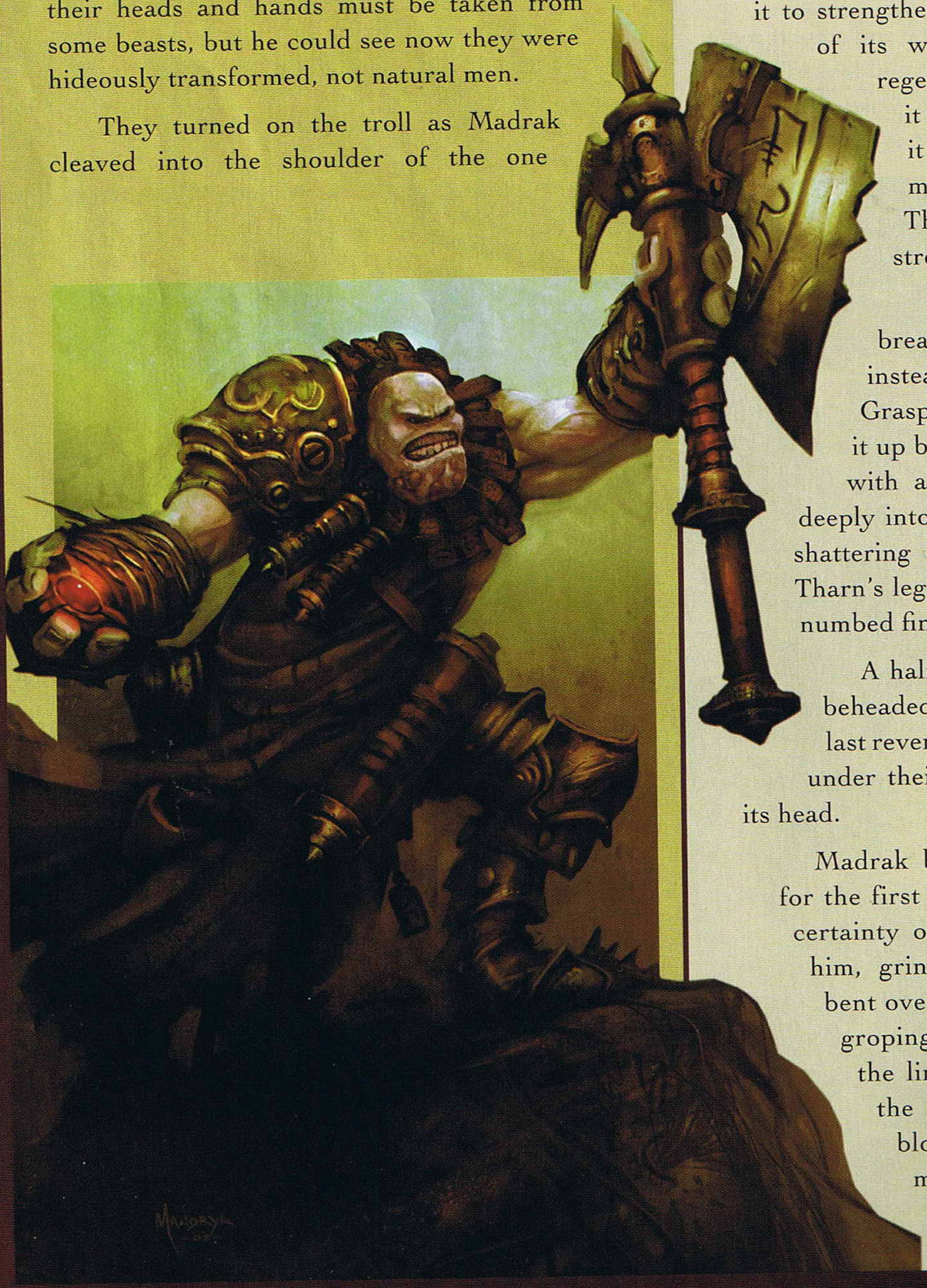
Spinning around he had just a moment before hulking figures leapt from the trees, screaming strange howls. They looked like half-man, half-beast, coming at him so quickly he had no time to examine them, only noting they were howling, eyes blood-shot and mad, chests bare and heavily muscled, each bearing long-handled axes. He had no time to count them, but there were many, more than he could hope to fend away.

Madrak retreated, trying to get his back against something. He raised his axe to block a downward hacking slash from the nearest of the creatures, but this opened him to a second swing from the one next to it. That axe bit through his side—not a deep wound but executed with startling speed. There were too many, all bent on his death. He scrambled back frantically.



His mind was still mingled with the troll but did not realize he had called to it until it charged and slammed into the bestial thing which had nicked him with its axe, knocking it aside and into the one next to it. Another one swung, but the troll caught its axe handle, almost tearing off the creature's arm as it wrenched the axe away for its own use. The troll's attack bought Madrak the moment of pause to realize these creatures were Tharn barbarians, a maddened tribe of half-human berserkers that haunted the deeper forest. Madrak had never seen them until now. At least eight remained, heads and faces distorted, as if they wore the masks of bears or wolves, their chests and arms almost human, but ridiculously muscled. Their fingers on each hand ended in unnatural claws. At first he thought their heads and hands must be taken from some beasts, but he could see now they were hideously transformed, not natural men.

They turned on the troll as Madrak cleaved into the shoulder of the one he fought, his axe sinking deep into the space between its neck and shoulder. It howled in pain and backhanded him, sending him flying into the underbrush. He barely managed to hold onto his axe, rolling to the side. The one he had struck collapsed, bleeding out from the deep shoulder wound.



Madrak was momentarily forgotten by the others. He could feel the troll's strength waning as it endured great wounds along its legs and abdomen. Madrak tried to gather his thoughts, to ready some sorcerous spell which would help the situation, but he had difficulty thinking, still locked in the pain and rage of the troll. None of the magic he knew would help here. He focused instead on drawing the troll's rage to himself, using it to strengthen the creature, closing several of its wounds. The troll's enormous regenerative capabilities provided it with tremendous stamina, but it was a doomed struggle. It managed to cleave another of the Tharn with its stolen axe, but its strength was fading.

Madrak swore under his breath, knowing he should flee, but instead charged from the tree line. Grasping his weighty axe, he brought it up behind his head, and then swung with a mighty yell, sinking its edge deeply into a Tharn with a meaty crunch, shattering through ribs and lungs. The Tharn's legs collapsed and its axe fell from numbed fingers.

A half dozen remained after the troll beheaded one with a powerful swing, its last revenge. The great creature collapsed under their blows, eyes rolling back into its head.

Madrak backed away, feeling true fear for the first time in his young life, the cold certainty of death. The Tharn turned on him, grinning madly, all but one who bent over the troll to hack into its chest, groping into the chest cavity. Behind the line of them the one desecrating the troll gave a roar and lifted a blood-soaked hand, grasping a massive purplish-red piece of meat—the troll's heart. Seeing this Madrak felt a grim certainty of his imminent fate.

There was a shout behind him—glancing over his shoulder, Madrak thought his eyes played tricks on him. He saw a raven-haired human youth with a drawn sword atop a black horse. The air seemed suddenly dark and strange, and there was a smell of ozone. Other men marched on foot, armored in dark blue and wielding oversized swords across which lightning danced.

Madrak had no time to spare wondering at this for he turned back to see the Tharn charging. The trollkin gave a yell to muster his courage, determined to take at least one or two with him, and stepped forward to meet their advance.

He heard a cry from behind, "No, sir, wait!" and was bewildered when the man on the horse charged past him straight into the fray, swinging his sword recklessly at those around them, drawing the Tharn attacks. The other armored men rushed forward on foot to defend him. With one great sideswipe of his keen sword, the youth managed to take the head clean from one Tharn's shoulders with a plume of dark blood, but was quickly surrounded and yanked off his horse. Madrak rushed forward, swiping his axe through the skull of a Tharn who groped for the downed man. The horse reared up and kicked at them, then turned to flee, a long but shallow series of clawed wounds bleeding along its flank. Madrak pulled the horseman to his feet and the two of them waded into battle side by side. Lightning crackled with a boom like thunder as the men with the oversized blades engaged.

Madrak saw that they were unaware of the last Tharn which had been gnawing the heart of the downed troll. This one's eyes glowed with a savage light as it charged, axe raised to deliver a killing blow to an oblivious soldier. Madrak stepped up and snapped his axe forward, seeing it tumble once to sink into the Tharn's face with a brutal sound like a split gourd. The Tharn ran several steps, as its legs tried to carry forward the attack, and then collapsed. The rest of the maddened creatures refused to retreat and fought to the last.

By the end, only one of the humans was injured, and not badly. Madrak and the youth shared a look of thanks, a wordless moment only understood by those who faced death together in battle. Madrak took the human's arm in a hearty clasp and grinned, repeating his thanks several times before letting go.

The youth was clearly some Cygnaran noble of importance. Madrak invited them back to his kriel so a proper feast could be held. Madrak learned the youth's name was Leto, and they talked during their return trip. Madrak was versed in Cygnaran as his father had impressed on him the importance of being able to communicate with neighboring humans, but this was one of the first occasions he had to use the language extensively. He learned the noble had been on an errand to a northern human town when they had come upon the Tharn tracks and decided to investigate.

During the feast later the soldiers loosened up, particularly after drinks began to flow. The story of the attack was related to a rapt audience. Caught up in the emotion of the moment, Madrak offered Leto the honor of kulgat, rarely bestowed on outsiders. Without hesitation the noble agreed, and each sliced open their palms to mix blood in a clasp of their hands, bonding them as brothers. The human's hand felt small in Madrak's, yet he sensed an inner strength to him.

It was only near the end of this night that one of the soldiers slipped and referred to Leto as "prince," and Madrak learned that this was the younger brother of the Cygnaran king. This did not phase Madrak; the brother of a king did not seem so different from the son of a chief. The full impact was not understood until later, when he spoke with his father, the chieftain. Madrak had never been outside the Thornwood, nor seen the cities of humanity. His father impressed on him the scope of power wielded by a king like this, with millions of vassals under his dominion. Leto seemed genuinely interested in the ways of Madrak's kriel, and despite the protests of his men they stayed for another week. In that time Madrak and Leto hunted in the forest and told stories, finding themselves kindred spirits despite the differences of their species and lives.

When Leto finally departed, the prince left Madrak the chained necklace he wore, bearing three gold coin-like medallions. One represented a sacred woman of his faith, another the kingdom, and the third the symbol of his bloodline. The human explained that showing this would grant him an audience in the capital anytime he wished, and he should visit if ever his need was great.

* * *

Madrak kept the chain as a remembrance of the time in his rash youth when he had narrowly escaped death. It would be many years and after his own elevation to chief before he would visit his distant blood-brother, but he thought often of their battle, and the strange hand of fate.

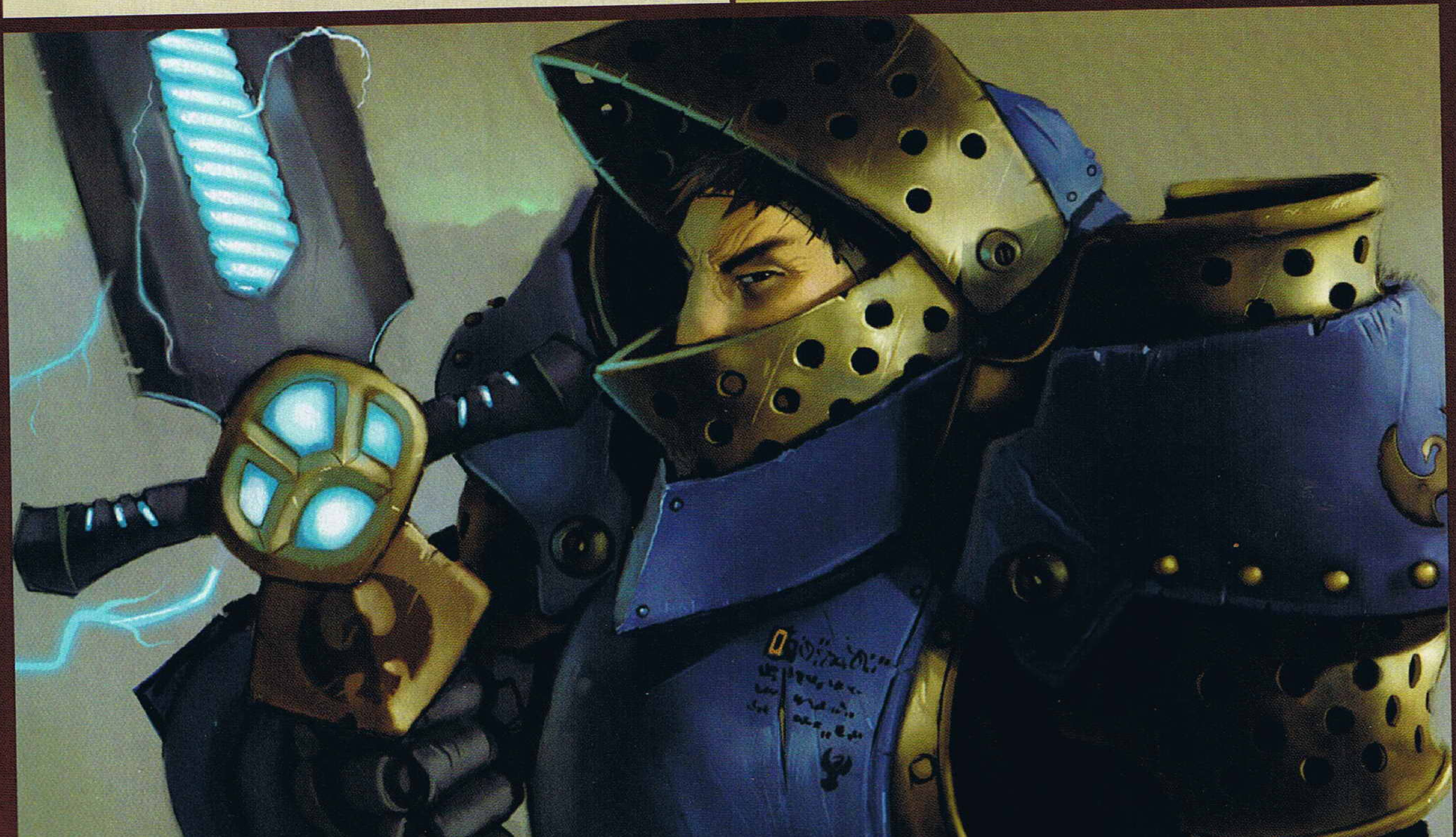
Madrak had seen Leto only twice since that time, on both occasions making the long trek south. The first had been when Leto invited Madrak to attend his crowning as king. This was his first visit to Caspia, and it had opened his eyes to the reality of a city so huge, teeming with more humans than he'd imagined could exist, let alone in one place behind towering walls.

Attending the king's crowning he had witnessed countless nobles bowing to this one man. He had later walked the maze of streets trying to take in the scope of the city, its factories belching smoke, the stench of spiced food and human waste in the same breath. His head swam and he had to flee out the north gate into the open land to take deep breaths, filling his lungs with fresh air. Even there he witnessed an endless flow of travelers on the road, marching in a column alongside wagons and horses, lined up for the gates. He had determined never to return, a decision he would gainsay twelve years later.

* * *

His second trip to Cygnar had only been a few months ago, though it felt longer. After war tore apart the Thornwood and Cryxian interlopers fell on the gathered kriels, he came to a difficult decision: against the advice of the more conservative shamans and elders he would at last leverage his relationship with Cygnar's king and gain support.

Gold chain in hand he had made the voyage and presented himself. Once in the company of King Leto, he was shocked to see how much the man had aged. It was easy to forget humans had briefer lives, for all their influence, wealth, and numbers. This meeting and requested boon had required Madrak to swallow his pride, yet this was made less painful by knowing he spoke to his blood-brother. King Leto had responded with compassion and generosity.



Not only had the king delivered considerable supplies to Ironhide's care, Leto made an intriguing proposition. He suggested Ironhide move his people out of the forest, east of the Black River, where there was considerable acreage of land unclaimed by any nation. This would be a temporary arrangement, but in this region the kriels could do Cygnar a service. Protectorate of Menoth forces had been joining the war front through this area. In exchange for protecting this border, the kriels could earn better lands within Cygnar, south of Corvis and away from the war front. The notion of fighting to earn land was something Chief Ironhide found appealing.

It was a fair offer, but this did not make it any easier for Madrak to uproot his people. His words to them had been passionate and aided by the memory of many recent horrors. They moved tens of thousands of trollkin out of the forest and entrenched themselves in the Glimmerwood and Widower's Wood. Good to his word, King Leto had provided ample supplies of food, blasting powder, and even fixed weapons with which to defend their villages, both small cannons and other firearms. Yet shortly after settling in, the skorne had come against them. Unwittingly they had moved from one war front to another.

Pokrul scowled, fingering his axe. "Your friend has us fight his wars on his border. We have been betrayed by his blood before."

◆

Madrak brooded on these things during the journey. He had gathered a small retinue of kinsmen and allies, each a veteran champion. Following Belkord's advice he brought Horthol and Pokrul, who were chiefs of their own kriels sworn to Madrak Ironhide. Horthol was an old friend and Madrak was pleased to have him along. Pokrul was more of a handful, an embittered kin who enjoyed arguing and debating almost as much as the thrill of battle. Yet his strength of arms had served Madrak well, and there were few kin he'd rather have at his side in trouble. These and three other proven champions were all he was willing to spare from the defenses. They made their way first to Corvis, there to hire a boat to quicken their travel the length of the Black River to Caspia, Cygnar's capital.

This river trip was not without danger, particularly in a time of war, as Protectorate raiders had intercepted a number of riverboats in recent months. Madrak felt naked and vulnerable without trolls in his retinue. But in the wild trolls were savage and cruel, and gladly preyed on mankind, thus were hunted and slain wherever encountered. Those in the Thornwood had only been saved from near extinction only by the protection of trollkin kriels who knew how to deal with them.

As he expected, Pokrul argued with him during the boat voyage south, although he had the courtesy to do so quietly, when the kin gathered in their cabins. "You place too much trust in this King Leto. We put ourselves in his power. Easier to take what we need, and tell him when it is too late to forbid it. Now we will give him a chance to refuse."

"There is a way to do these things, Pokrul. We have an arrangement, and I trust this man. That is enough."

Pokrul remained disgruntled. He later insisted on bringing up another matter. "We should have taken the offer of the blackclads. They have always given good advice to my kriel."

"Enough. Let us not tread again that well traveled path." Pokrul referred to an offer made before their exodus from the Thornwood by one of the mightiest of the wilderness prophets. "The blackclad offered us no favors. I have heard stories from the north, where they bid us go. There was no more safety there than in the Glimmerwood. I start to think there is no refuge for our kind."

Pokrul scowled, fingering his axe. "Your friend has us fight his wars on his border. We have been betrayed by his blood before."

Horthol had been silent witness to most of these exchanges, refusing to get involved. But in this case he interjected, "He said enough, Pokrul. Stop picking that scab. We made our choice. We cannot be always looking over our shoulders and second guessing the past."

It was not the end of their bickering, but Pokrul let go of this topic for the duration of the voyage. Madrak could see he was still not satisfied, but knew no words would convince him. Pokrul had not traveled enough to understand just how arduous a move to the Scarsfell would have been. Moving fifty or a hundred miles east from their forest had been one thing. Trying to get them across all of Khador into the frozen northern forest would have been an impossible ordeal. Nor was Madrak willing yet to entirely give up on the Thornwood.

* * *

They gathered stares in Caspia, each decked in full armor, bearing large weapons, and wearing the distinct quitari kilts of their kriels. Chief Madrak was an impressive but exotic sight, with his heavy metal tiled necklace, amulets, and sacred scroll cases. He wore his full ceremonial regalia as Chieftain of the combined kriels of the Thornwood. This garb was strange to those in the city, even those few trollkin who had moved there to make their living. Madrak let them appreciate the sight of true kin who had not given up the ways of their people. For his champions this was their first visit to Caspia, largest and most ancient of the still thriving human communities. It was humbling, and also disquieting. Entering the gates of the massive towering blue walls was like being swallowed whole.

> "**Chief Madrak Ironhide**, welcome again to my hall. The hospitality of Caspia is yours. Tonight we will feast well."
> His smile was warm.

They disembarked near the northern end of the city, as fighting with the Protectorate made the inner-city waterways a hazard few captains were willing to take. Even here the eastern walls with their differently painted white and gold could be seen. Madrak had heard the gates of Sul had been breached, and fighting was ongoing in those streets. Caspia's Menite sister-city had proven difficult to swallow. Madrak was more versed on these matters than most kin, with a love of history and current events inherited by his father.

Even crowded streets cleared as they walked, and children pointed. Hardly anyone in Caspia traveled fully armed except the dauntless city guard. They confronted Madrak after leaving the boat, and he displayed Leto's amulet. It was a tense time, as the token was part of an old and largely forgotten custom. He knew from the eyes of the first guard that he did not know its meaning. They were stalled until that man found a grizzled older captain—who took the necklace, staring at its coins in open disbelief. "Where did you get this?"

Madrak answered, "From Prince Leto's own hand, twenty-six years ago."

There had been similar ordeals his last two visits and Madrak accepted it as part of the ritual of his visit. The captain squinted again at the amulets, and then gathered a group of his burliest guards to escort the trollkin to Castle Raelthorne. The captain didn't speak during the march, brow furrowed with worry, clearly concerned about the repercussions if Madrak had lied to him.

The castle was a formidable fortress which loomed over even Caspia's ancient walls, the home of kings since ancient times, although expanded in the last century. Named Castle Raelthorne because of the efforts of Leto's father and grandfather; each had added to its bulk. It was not built to please the eye, but for defense—defenses Leto had tested in his bloody coup, dethroning his brother. Madrak thought on this as he approached the ominous edifice.

The outer city guard passed them to more elaborately attired men serving as the castle guard, among them halberdiers dressed in armor not dissimilar from that worn by the men who had helped save Madrak over two decades ago. By the time they entered the castle both Madrak and his champions felt that they had passed through a half-dozen gauntlets and endured the scrutiny of hundreds. Madrak could see the strain on his kin, particularly when all but Madrak were asked to leave their weapons. He had warned them of this, and they obeyed, with some grumbling.

Madrak was allowed to keep his axe—this was Rathrok, an ancient weapon of enormous power he had taken up after Cryxian attacks on his kriels in the Thornwood. The castle guard eyed it warily, a fearsome looking implement even for those who did not know its power. He was treated as a visiting sovereign, and would not be forced to surrender his weapon until the throne room.

At last they were marched through the great outer hall, past dozens of richly attired onlookers whispering as they passed. As on previous visits, Madrak looked for the great painting on the wall which depicted the Corvis Treaties, upon which his ancestor Grindar could be seen standing amid the humans and dwarves of that gathering. He bowed slightly to the spirit of that great kin, whom his father had spoken of often.

The great doors to the enormous throne room were opened as horns sounded and a herald announced their presence. The Stormguards walked in step with the trollkin, who never looked more out of place than here. Madrak saw the king waiting for him, standing down at the base of his throne as a courtesy, his highest ranking vassals hovering behind him. At a distance of a hundred paces, marked by a change in the marble flooring, Madrak stopped and placed his weighty axe on thin line of carpet. Even muffled it settled with a heavy noise.

"Please, **Madrak**, rise! You are not my vassal. You should not kneel." **Leto's** voice was alarmed.

His champions stayed back near the axe as Madrak continued forward alone, the room almost painfully silent. He ignored the eyes upon him, curious appraising stares, and looked only to King Leto, who gave him a nod and a small smile. His eyes were tired, yet warm. The connection was still there, the old trace of the kulgat, which Madrak could smell as he got closer; a nearly imperceptible scent that marked his bonded brother. They clasped arms in the trollkin manner, as Madrak was reminded how small and slim the man was in person. Leto was not dressed in finery, but a ceremonial uniform he preferred to wear when his kingdom was at war. Nor did he bear a crown, its absence not reducing his authority.

"Chief Madrak Ironhide, welcome again to my hall. The hospitality of Caspia is yours. Tonight we will feast well." His smile was warm.

"King Leto Raelthorne," Madrak spoke the Cygnaran, which came easily to him. He had been speaking it recently as certain kriels in the southern Thornwood preferred it to Molgur-Trul. "There may not be opportunity or time for feasts. I cannot stay any longer than my needs require. Every moment away from my people is time they risk attack."

Leto took a moment to look around him, his expression considered. Madrak had been avoiding meeting the eyes of any of those here, knowing little of Caspia's politics. Several nearby were wearing what he took for military uniforms, although it was hard to tell a human noble from a human general, and often they were one and the same. He recognized one man behind the king as the highest general of Cygnar's army, an older man with a sour expression on his face. That one had argued against Leto's support in their earlier meeting, saying they could spare no supplies while at war.

Madrak was tired of such things. He had no patience now for human ways. But he knew it would not do to offend them. Leto spoke, his voice low so it would not carry. "I have heard news of your travails since last we spoke. My sympathies to you and your people. I know there has been hard fighting, and many deaths. I would have you tell me of what you have faced."

"I can tell you stories which would sicken and enrage you. Perhaps once both our peoples are at peace we can do so. We can share tales of war and carnage and heroism in the face of death. But right now I have come for another matter, and my need is great."

There was whispering from the fringes, but Leto took his words gravely, nodding. "We will not stand on ceremony. Had you the time I would welcome a distraction from my seemingly endless councils, and provide you entertainment. But our own wars go apace on two fronts, one within sight of these walls. Being brief serves my needs as well as yours."

Leto paused; eyes troubled, and then looked up as if seeing those around them for the first time. "Leave us." He said this in a clear and strong tone, which carried surprisingly well throughout the large hall. There was an instant silence and many surprised looks. "Clear the chamber, please. Stay near to hand, we will resume anon."

They did not like enduring banishment from the hall like so many wayward children, and Madrak heard angry muttering. The men behind King Leto lingered, approaching nearer to hand, but the king inclined his head to them and indicated the door. Madrak's champions gave him a look but he also nodded and they too left the chamber. The Chieftain knew he was not alone with the king. Even now some number of sharpshooters waited hidden in the balconies above, keeping him ever in their sight. Two of his royal Stormguards had stayed at their post by the throne, and two at the door which closed after those that left. Despite this, Madrak felt better with the others gone.

> **Madrak** could not believe what he was hearing. "Are you refusing to honor your promise?"

Leto spoke as soon as the doors had closed. "Madrak, old friend, I am afraid I have given you everything our kingdom can muster. I realize you are sorely pressed by the invading skorne. We too have been fighting them. They are probing all along our eastern border. We've had to fend them off near Fort Falk and even as far south as Eastwall. Our border garrisons are stretched thin. If we were not already at war I'd gladly send the army at Corvis to your aid. Weapons, food, supplies, all would be yours. But at this time, my larder is empty, and my soldiers committed."

Madrak listened to this, having expected something of the sort. "I did not come to ask for supplies. That which you already provided has served well." Madrak kneeled down on one leg to the carpet, bowing his head before the king, something he had never done before.

"Please, Madrak, rise! You are not my vassal. You should not kneel." Leto's voice was alarmed.

"Yet I do kneel, humbly, and ask at this time that you honor your debt as a great king and one who holds his word as a sacred bond. When last I came to you, you promised if we held the border, we would earn lands in Cygnar. Good farmlands, a place where our people could start a new life. We have fought and died at your border. Were it not for our sacrifice, the skorne would have fallen on your lands. Our blood paid this price. I kneel and ask you to honor your promise."

There was a long silence at the end of this, and then Madrak felt Leto's hand on his shoulder. "Stand, Madrak. I appreciate your sincerity. Know that I fully intend to repay this debt. Your sacrifices will not be ignored. We did not expect the skorne to return so quickly and in such force. We have no idea how they are crossing the Stormlands in such numbers. This is a crisis that comes at the worst time. You are not alone in your suffering."

Madrak stood and scowled, feeling the first hints of the king's vacillation. "I am not callous, but suffering is not new in times of war. What has this to do with the needs of my people? Tell me where our new lands are, so I can move my kriels to safer ground. Our warriors will continue to fight on your borders, but our young and elders must be shielded."

Leto sighed. "Things are never as simple as we would like them to be. I will require more time to find lands to serve your people. Right now many of my citizens are also displaced and enduring serious food shortages—we have not recovered from last year's drought. Every day we come one step closer to annihilation. The dukes and earls who oversee my lands are sorely pressed. The lands I had hoped to pass to you were recently given to refugees from Llael and the northern Thornwood. This was a necessary measure to ease considerable suffering, enacted by the Duke of the Northern Midlunds, who was ignorant of my plans for that region."

Madrak could not believe what he was hearing. "Are you refusing to honor your promise?"

Leto held up a hand, shaking his head, "No! Listen to my words. We will find land for your kriels. But it will take time. Duke Ebonhart is a reasonable and good man, a loyal vassal. His own honor is at stake, for the promises he has made to those asking him for refuge. He cannot evict those he has promised to shield, citizens driven from Fellig, Fisherbrook, and many villages as well as refugees of Llael."

Madrak began to hear a ringing in his ears, and his fists knotted as he felt his heart hammering in his chest. "What has any of this to do with your sworn oath?"

Leto's eyes were unyielding. "I understand your anger. But we are both rulers. We must be pragmatic. You rely on the support of lesser chiefs and elders, those who bring the young to fight for you. It is the same with me. There are those to whom I, as king, must answer. My highest nobles maintain the peace and my rule in their lands. I cannot dictate to them. We will find a home for your people. But it is more complex than it once was. It will require time to work through these difficulties. Abide with me. In less than a year we can settle this."

Madrak gritted his teeth, his voice strangled. "Less than a year? My people will be dead! We cannot endure these attacks. We must have new lands now or face extinction."

King Leto's tone betrayed his own exasperation. "I have nothing for you now. Did you think there was fertile acreage of soil unused and awaiting your arrival? The Cryxians that attacked your kriels have also beset our lands. Every farm within our borders is precious; finding arrangements for your kriels cannot be done in an instant!"

"We have defended your border, yet you will not allow us the same respect you give to humans of another nation? Those who flee hardship while we turn to face it? How is this just?"

"If I had something to give you, it would be yours. I am telling you now, you must have patience. Dig in as our own army has dug in at countless battlefields, and weather the storm."

Madrak turned from Leto, his pale face reddening with anger. He stepped away and raised his hand, knowing as he did so he may be calling his own death. He pulled on the tension he always felt when Rathrok was not in his grasp, and the great axe lifted of its own accord and then shot across the air as if pulled by a heavy cord into his hand. He heard a rustling and shifting, a shouted query, and awaited the explosive boom of rifles. He held his breath against it, almost hoping it would come. Hoping to be shot before enduring this breach of faith. He stood with muscles tensed, facing away from the king for several long seconds.

He finally turned, seeing King Leto held up a hand to the unseen protectors, likely the only thing which saved his life. The king's face was grave, but calm and unafraid. Behind him near the throne the two Stormguards had set their halberds at the ready, stepping to flank the king. The two nearer the entry door had also moved forward with their weapons.

Madrak spoke, his voice deep and intense. "This axe is called World Ender, and by lifting it in battle I have awakened a cursed doom, or so say the elders. I took this weapon only at last resort, in defense of my people. We abandoned all we could not carry, by your word. You promised we would earn shelter and protection, new lands, fighting on your border."

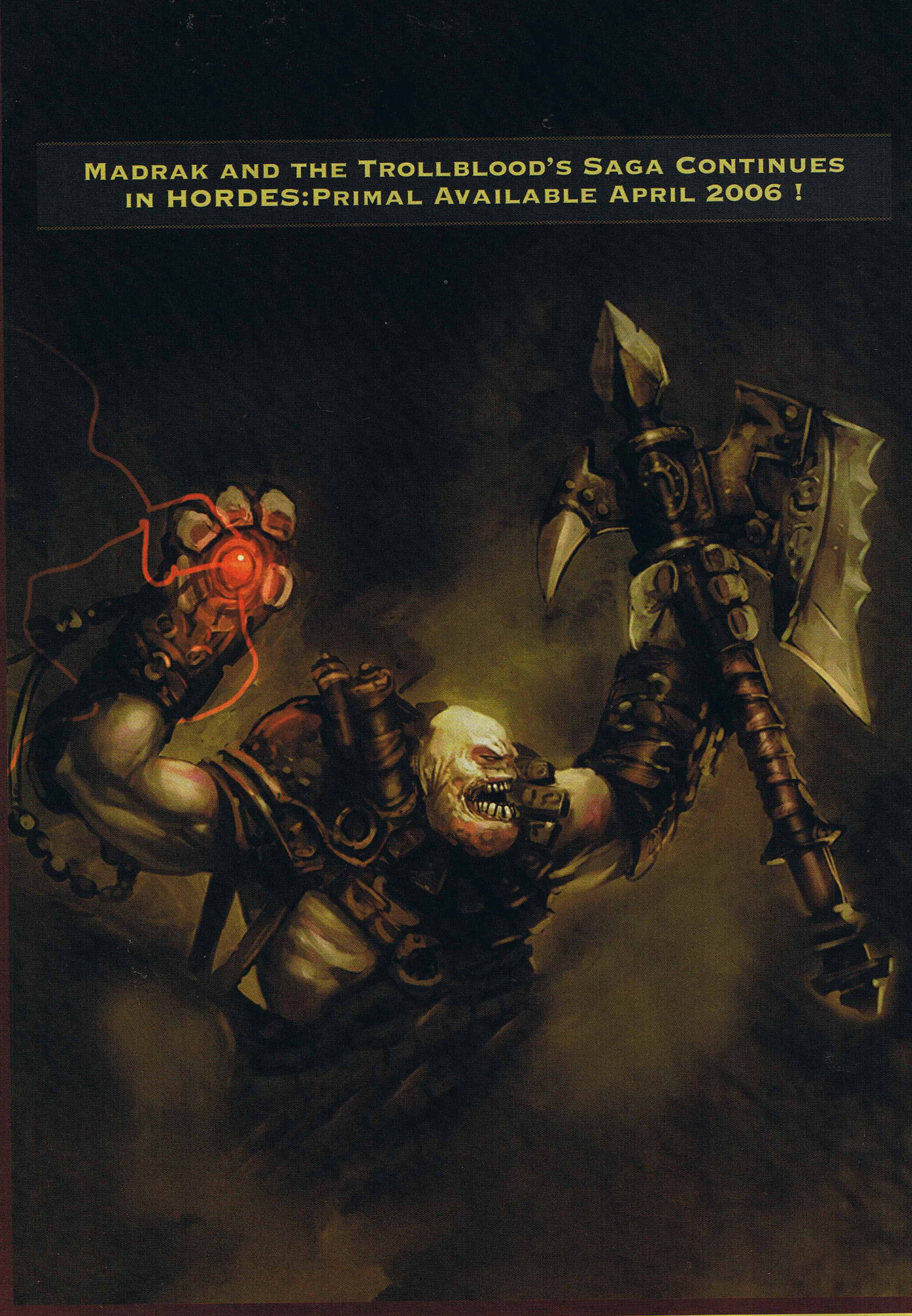
Leto shook his head, "You can say it as many times as you wish. The reality will not change. Strike me if you must. I know your resolve. You could kill me before you are brought down, if my death before yours will bring satisfaction. This will not change that I have no lands to give you."

Madrak shook his head. "I will not strike you. My oaths hold true, and I do not make them lightly. When we undertook kulgat you were bound to me, to my family. Neither you nor anyone you count as kin will be harmed by my hand, even if it costs my life. But this I vow: I will find a way for my people to survive. If I must take lands promised me by force, I will do so."

Leto spread his hands, his expression aggrieved, "I do not seek any conflict with your people, Madrak. Not now or ever. But if you act against my citizens, we will stop you."

"We will each do what we must, as we always have. If you do not want to fight, tell your soldiers not to get in our way. But we will take what you promised. I will not allow us to fight to extinction outside your borders so our blood does not stain your soil. Stand in our way, and there will be carnage. Only your protection, yours alone, do I promise."

Chief Madrak Ironhide held up the gold chain which had granted him safe passage, its medallions gleaming in the light of the hall, and threw it to the ground at Leto's feet. He strode from the hall ignoring the pleas of the man he had once called his brother. His champions waited outside—seeing his expression they knew better than to ask him questions. They followed in his wake as the great doors of the throne room closed again, with a sound like the sealing of a tomb.



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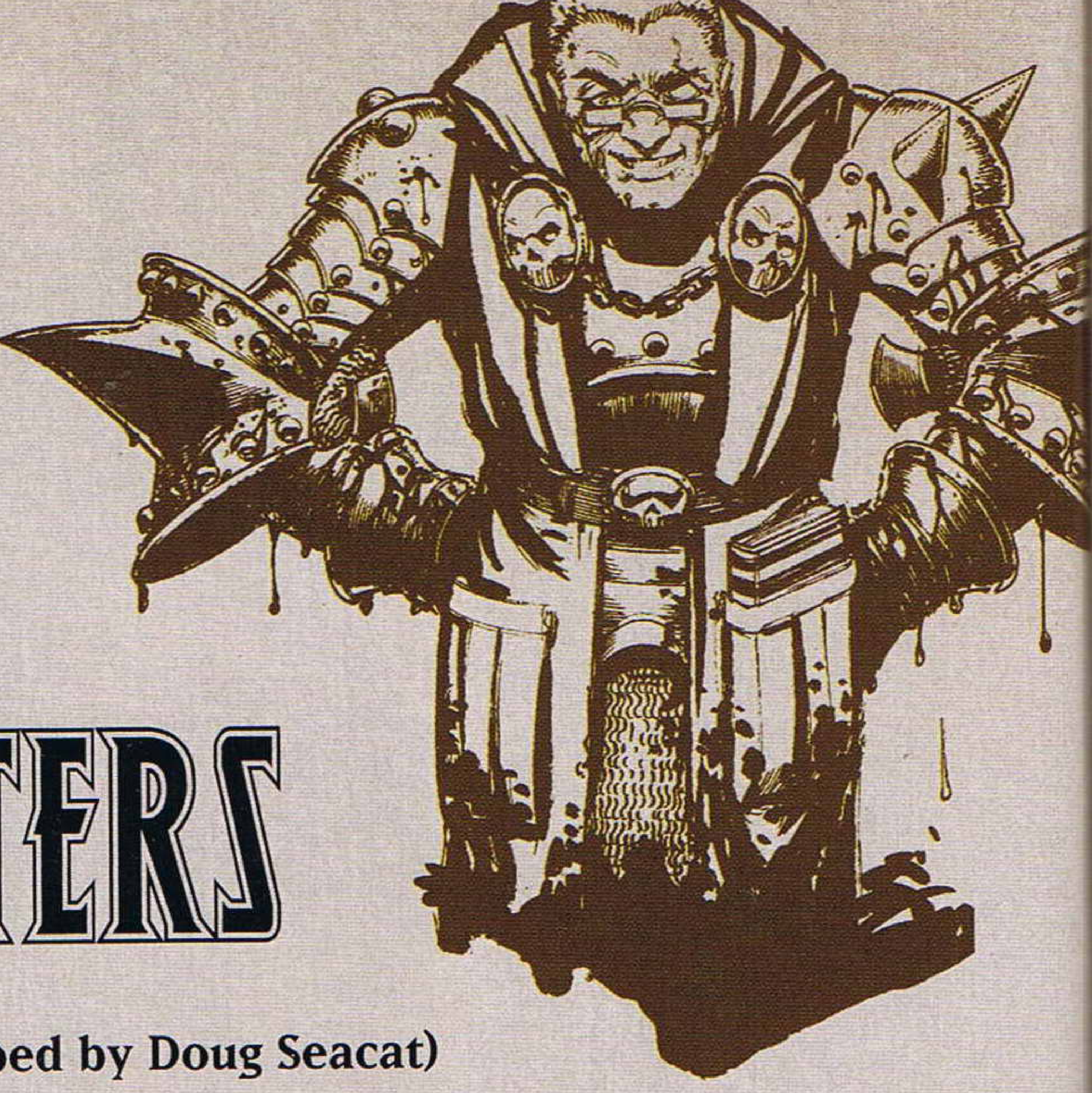
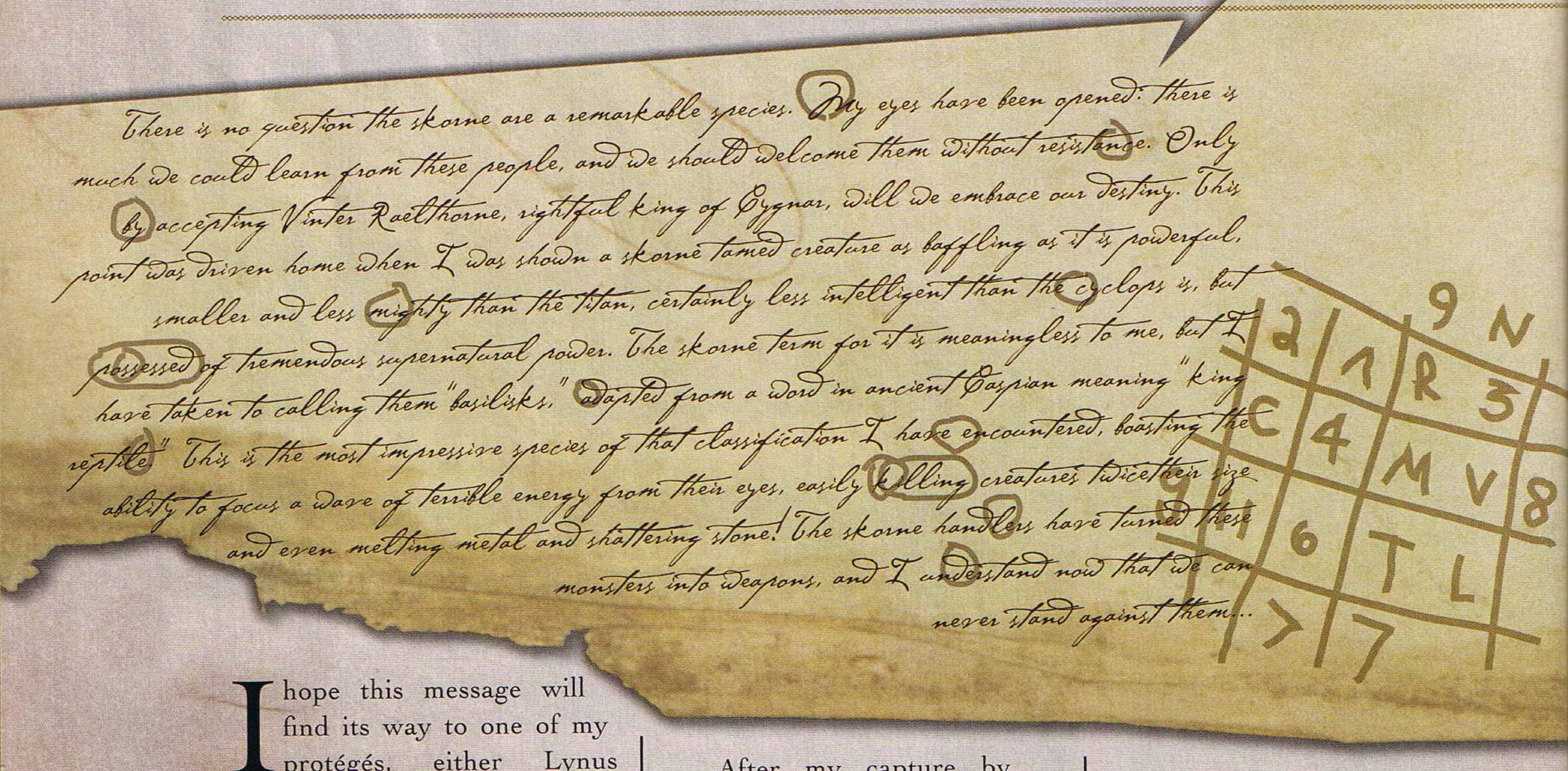


By Viktor Pendrake (Transcribed by Doug Seacat)

DEATH IN THE MARCHES, PART III



There is no question the skorne are a remarkable species. My eyes have been opened: there is much we could learn from these people, and we should welcome them without resistance. Only by accepting Vinter Raelthorne, rightful king of Cygnar, will we embrace our destiny. This point was driven home when I was shown a skorne tamed creature as baffling as it is powerful, smaller and less mighty than the titan, certainly less intelligent than the cyclops is, but possessed of tremendous supernatural power. The skorne term for it is meaningless to me, but I have taken to calling them "basilisks," adapted from a word in ancient Caspian meaning "king reptile." This is the most impressive species of that classification I have encountered, boasting the ability to focus a wave of terrible energy from their eyes, easily killing creatures twicetheir size and even melting metal and shattering stone! The skorne handlers have turned these monsters into weapons, and I understand now that we can never stand against them...

I hope this message will find its way to one of my protégés, either Lynus Wesselbaum or Edrea Lloryrr, and that someone can decipher the old military code by which I embedded this message within the long and obsequious letter of tripe I was forced to compose. As much as it pains me that this drivel might be my last legacy, I had to take the risk so I can relate what has happened.

After my capture by the skorne I was convinced death would follow. I lost track of days as we journeyed deeper into the wind-swept wastes of the Marches. At last I was able to witness the Stormlands, a phenomenon I cannot accept as natural. The skies were split by unceasing lightning while the clouds churned and seethed like a living thing.

From within my cage I observed tall metallic rods carried by cyclops at intervals throughout our train, each one trailing a thin chain. On numerous occasions I saw lightning crash down in a blinding flash and an explosion of sound only to strike one of these rods and harmlessly disperse.

I am embarrassed to note I was asleep when we managed to arrive at shelter, so I did not observe the outward guise of this fortification. The strange weather and my injured condition conspired to make me delirious, occasionally falling into deep unconsciousness. I awoke to find myself in a small cell of dry stone, my injuries expertly bandaged.

A figure soon strode into my cell, garbed in strange attire and appearing not dissimilar from the nomadic Idrians, wearing long wrappings of light fabric layered to cover all flesh, including his face. Until he removed his heavy goggles and unwrapped his face, I could judge nothing about him. At this point I saw a rugged and leathery face, turned dark by long exposure to the sun. I was confused to face a human, not a skorne, and I didn't recognize him until I heard his voice.

"Well, well, if it isn't my old student. Perhaps you thought you had become the master, but clearly our proper roles are restored." It was Saxon Orrik, none other than the reprehensible ranger, once my superior in the Cygnaran Army. A man I had presumed dead after hearing he had ventured east into the Marches to follow Vinter.

"I see you have at last found a people willing to stomach your ghoulish habits. Bravo, Saxon." I will not waste precious space in this encrypted message relating the history of Orrik, which is well charted among the documents of his military tribunal, nor the insulting banter we exchanged. It brought me no satisfaction, yet Saxon clearly enjoyed my plight.

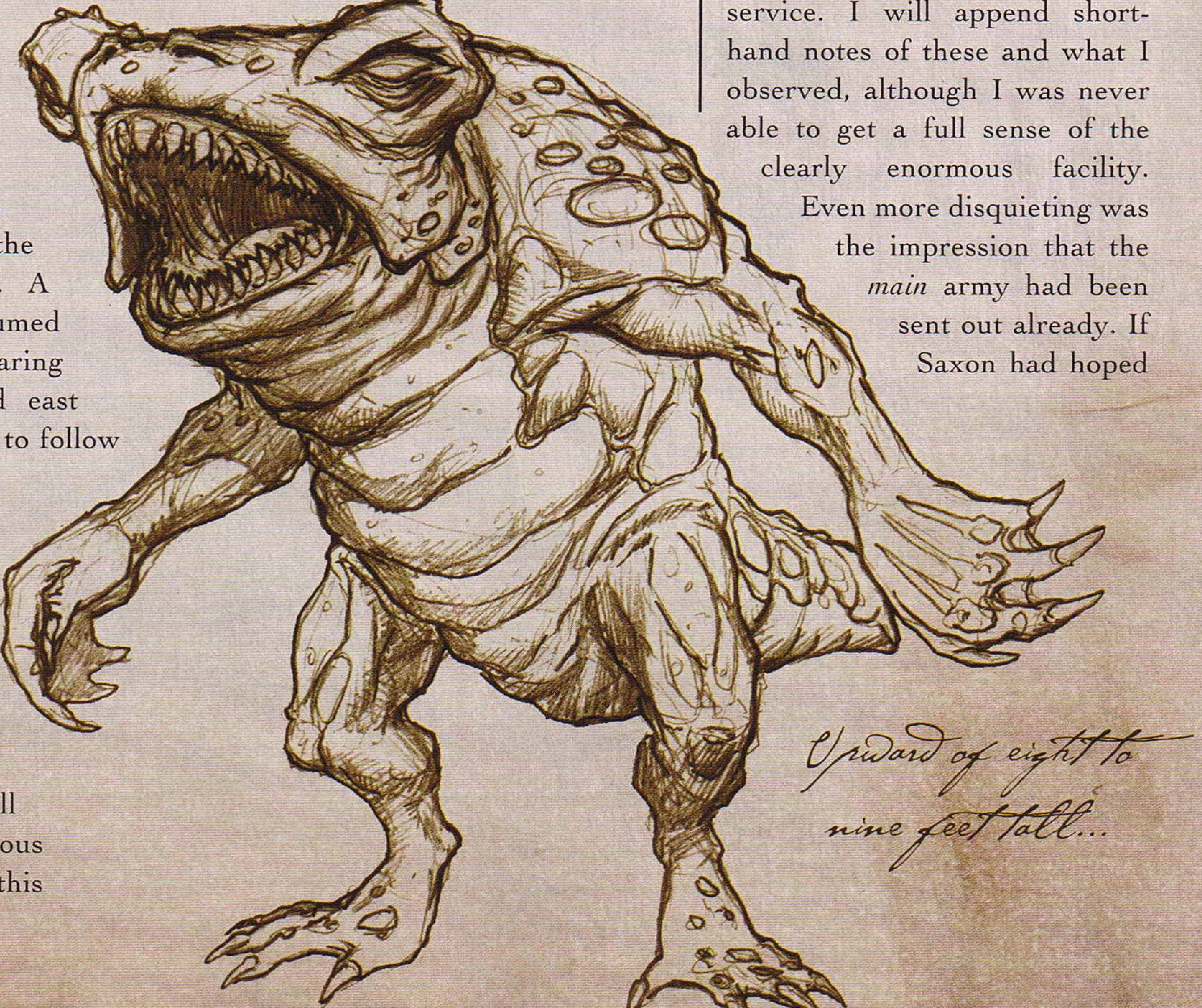
He could not resist the urge to gloat about his survival in the Marches, to boast how he had become the singular master of desert terrain, the only man or skorne who had accurately charted the lengths of the Stormlands, and other such boasts. It seemed he had won esteem among the skorne for this and for his relationship with Vinter Raelthorne, whom they titled the Conqueror.

I couldn't resist wheedling him about one topic in particular, "I noticed your conspicuous absence from the assault on Corvis, Saxon. Perhaps you got lost in a sandstorm?"

For a moment I thought he would murder me, which frankly had a morbid appeal. Saxon Orrik had been expelled from Cygnar's military for a number of atrocities, including cruel treatment of captured prisoners. I had little hope of emerging from this encounter unscathed.

After marshalling his temper, Saxon retorted that he had only missed the attack on Corvis as he had been tasked to remain at the fortress and "ensure reinforcements made it across." Further wheedling unearthed the fact that Vinter's assault on Corvis three years ago failed because a second army intended to reinforce the first never arrived, part of some treachery since redressed. This led to disquieting conclusions about the size of the overall skorne army, clearly Saxon's intent.

Once he tired of this, he took me from my cell so I could endure a diatribe as we surveyed a massive fortress training facility and I was shown several ominous creatures the skorne enslaved and conditioned into service. I will append shorthand notes of these and what I observed, although I was never able to get a full sense of the clearly enormous facility. Even more disquieting was the impression that the *main* army had been sent out already. If Saxon had hoped



Upward of eight to nine feet tall...

to impress me, I must admit he succeeded.

Even for Saxon this display seemed an indulgence, and when I asked why he bothered, he dragged me to a great hall. I could see a familiar twisted smile on his lips as he threw me at the feet of a great throne. I looked up into a face, one I recognized immediately, despite the lean lines, greyer hair, and peculiar foreign armor: Vinter Raelthorne IV, ex-king of Cygnar, now Conqueror of the Skorne Empire. Saxon grasped my neck and forced me prostrate. I was in no shape to resist and was in great pain before I was allowed to rise, gasping, to a seated position.

"Kill me if you must," I said, with more exhaustion than bravado, "but I've heard enough speeches today."

Vinter is described as a humorless tyrant, and I knew he had killed many men for less. He spoke to Saxon instead. "He does not look like much. From his reputation, I expected someone... larger."

Saxon sneered. "His reputation always exceeded his talent. He is a spy, and should be executed."

Vinter nodded. "Yes, but perhaps he has his uses. It is rare that we are graced by one of such extensive education." His tone conveyed scorn and dismissal. "You, slave!"

He said this to me, yet the term was so offensive that I was struck dumb, blinking at him stupidly. He continued as if this were the proper response. "You are chosen to be graced with a grave responsibility and honor. I require you to immortalize my works, to describe and detail my empire. You will go east and chronicle what no other man has seen."

I considered those words, and the full impact of this statement fell on me. Yet I could not digest it, as it seemed too absurd. "Why would I do this thing?" I dared to demand.

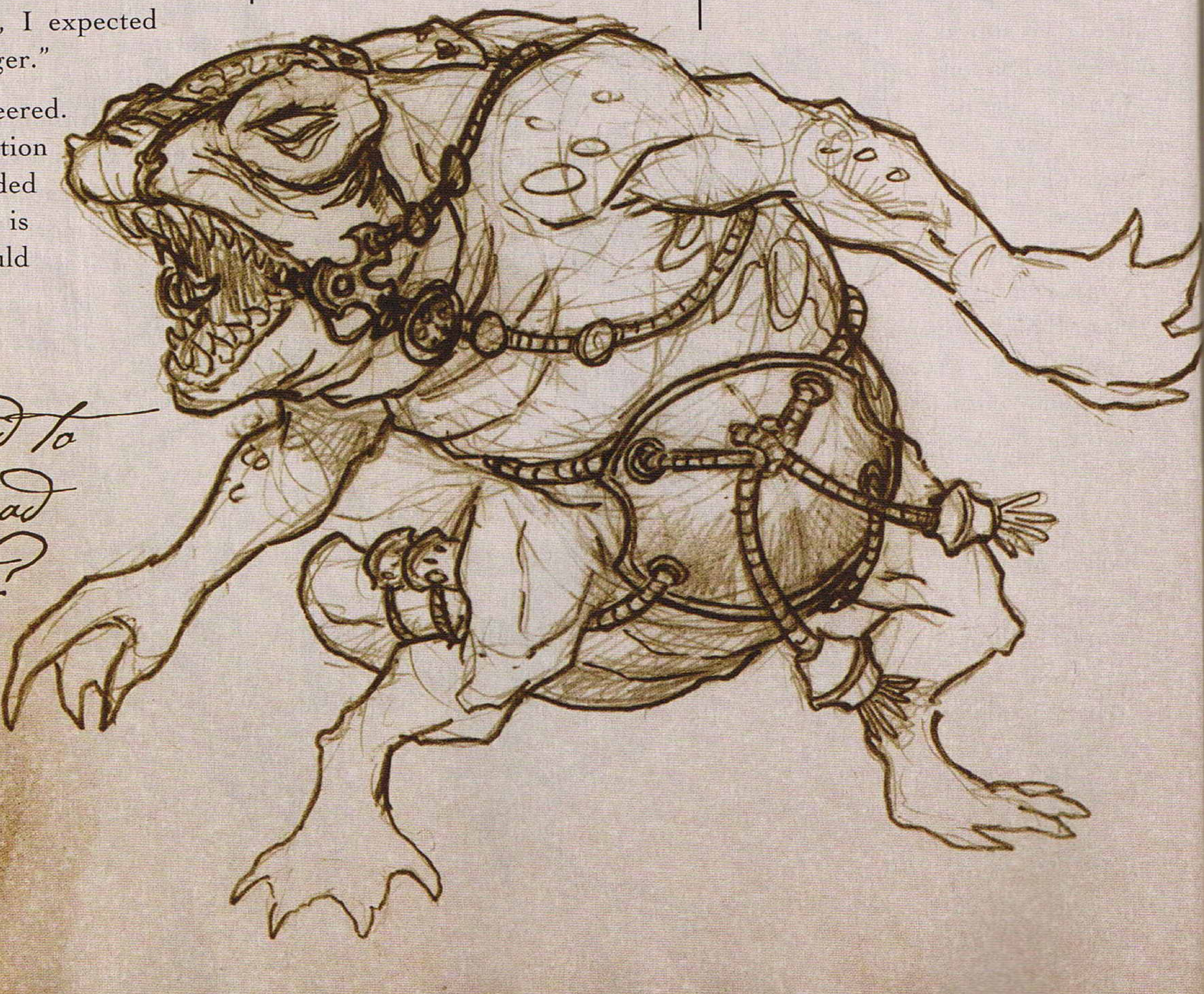
"You will do as I command, or you will die. Not quickly, nor painlessly." This was said without malice, as if my life mattered no more to him than a fish caught on a hook.

I could not help glancing at Saxon, and saw his face was red and unhappy; clearly he had not expected me to be given another chance to escape death. A chance I may yet regret seizing.

My audience ended, Vinter bid Saxon take me back to my cell, there to write the letter of pablum in which I coded this message. Saxon will no doubt see my treacherous letter delivered, as he enjoys the notion of debasing my reputation in this way.

I now venture to eastern Immoren. My dream of exploring an unknown continent has been realized by the forced patronage of what could be our kingdom's greatest enemy. I fear I will never return; Vinter will execute me, eventually. Others will have to carry on my work, for my fate is not my own. Remember me.

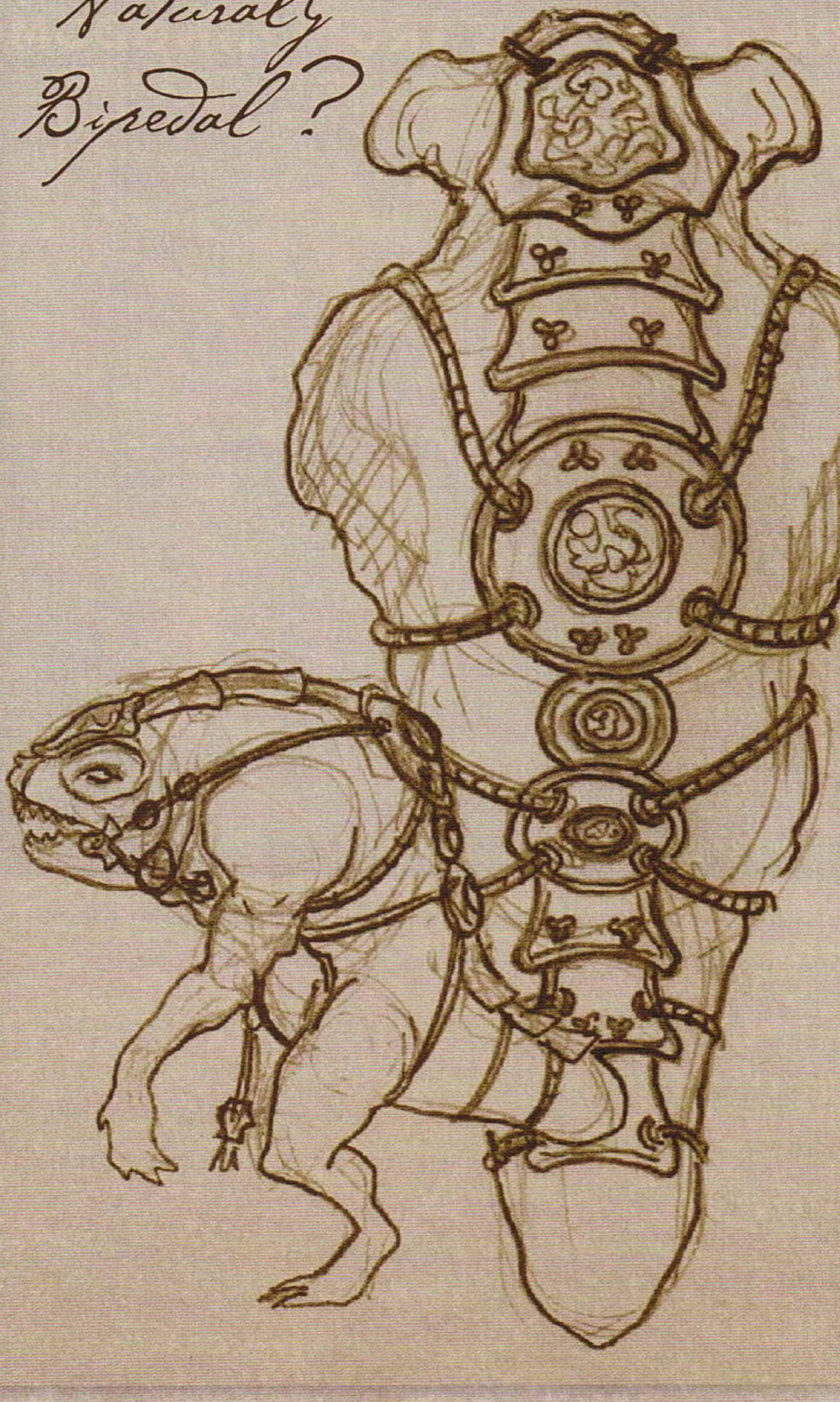
~VP



...hooks used to control head orientation?

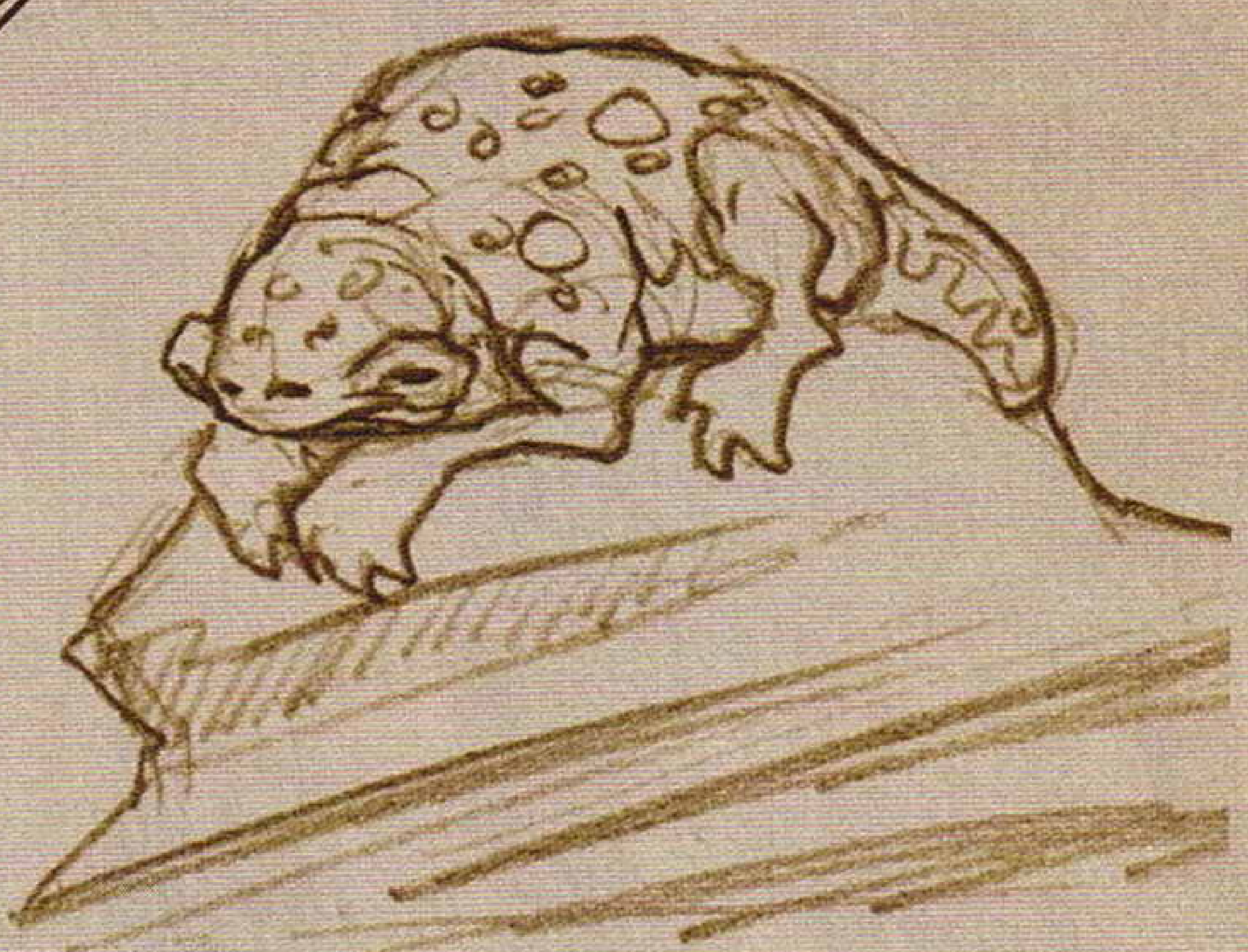
Basalisk

Basilisk:	Large Magical Beast
Hit Dice:	6d10+24 (57 hp)
Initiative:	+5
Speed:	40 ft. (8 squares), burrow 10 ft.
Armor Class:	16 (-1 Size, +1 Dex, +6 Natural), touch 10, flat-footed 15
BAB/Grapple:	+6/+15
Attack:	Bite +10 (2d6+7)
Full Attack:	Bite +10 (2d6+7)
Space/Reach:	10 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks:	Withering energy, poison
Special Qualities:	Darkvision 60', low-light vision, scent
Saves:	Fort +9, Reflex +6, Will +3
Abilities:	Str 20, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 10
Skills:	Listen +7, Spot +8
Feats:	Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative
Environment:	Any desert or warm land
Organization:	Solitary, mated pair, or harem (1 male + 2-3 females)
Challenge Rating:	7
Alignment:	Usually neutral
Advancement:	7-14 (Large), 15-20 (Huge)
Level adjustment:	—



Naturaly Bipedal?

They appear to enjoy the heat



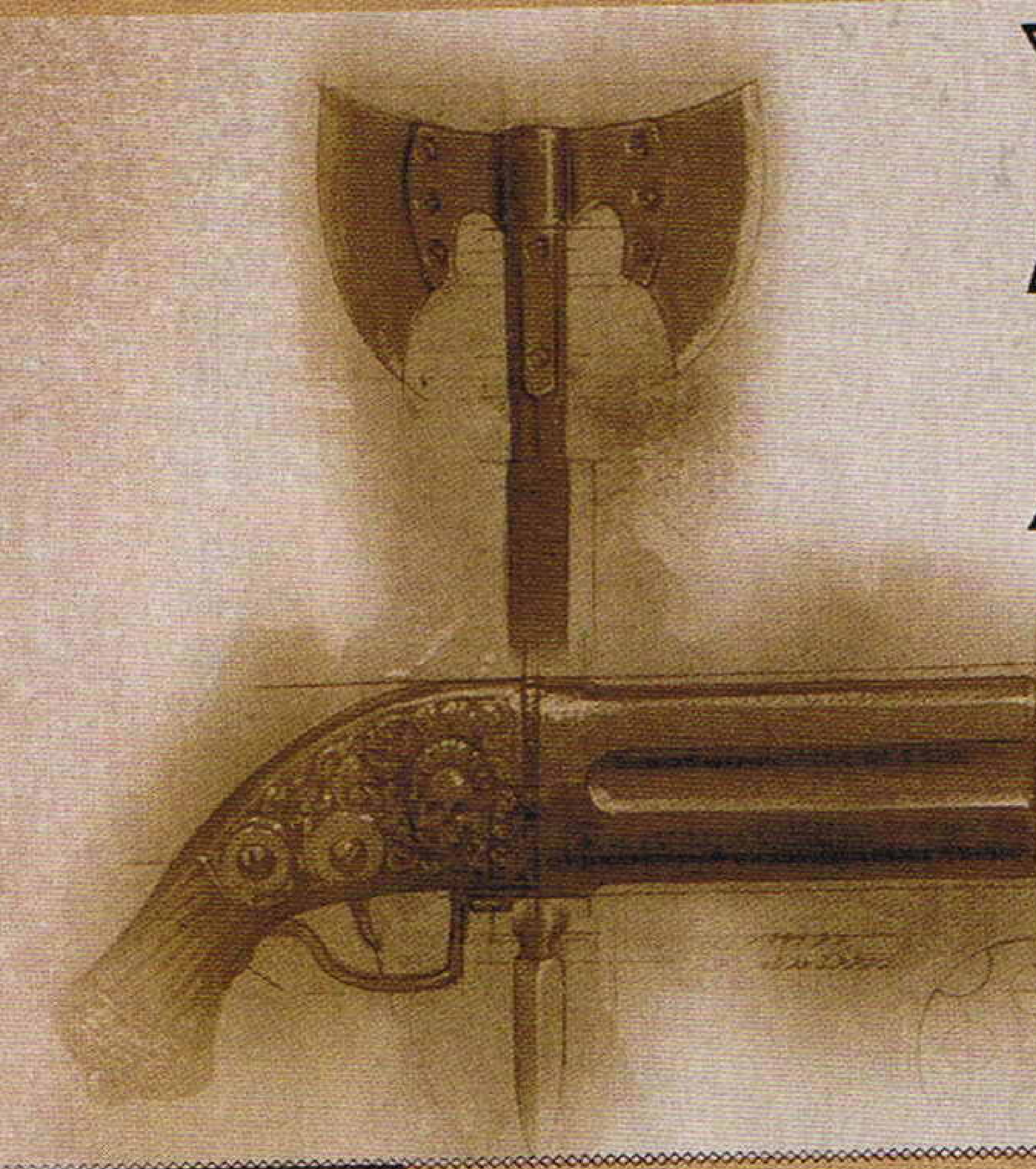
Combat

Basilisks have few natural enemies due to their terrible gaze; only the skorne are brave enough to confront and capture them. They dwell underground in tunneled burrows but emerge to sun themselves, being cold-blooded. They are highly territorial and eagerly attack intruding creatures. They are temperamental and aggressive, particularly in mated pairs. Basilisks are equally comfortable walking erect on two legs or using all four limbs for movement. They reserve their forward claws for burrowing, and attack with their poisonous bite if engaged.

Those captured, bred, and trained by the skorne will be Conditioned (see NQ #3). Female basilisks undergo more severe and specialized conditioning.

Withering energy (Su): As a standard action the basilisk can focus tremendous disintegrating energies from its eyes, tearing apart flesh and even melting and bending metal. After use, the basilisk cannot use this power again until 1d4 rounds later. This cone of disruptive energy originates from the basilisk's eyes and extends out 30 feet. This deals 6d6 damage, Fortitude save DC 17 for half. Creatures reduced to 0 or fewer hit points are entirely disintegrated leaving behind only a trace of fine dust. This attack also damages objects. Creatures within this cone must also succeed a Will save DC 17 or be repulsed, with effects identical to the repulsion spell. Save DCs are Constitution-based. Basilisks are the effects of this energy.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial damage 1d6 Con, secondary damage 2d6 Con. The save DC is Constitution-based.



FOUNDRY, FORGE, & CRUCIBLE

By Luke Johnson

One aspect of the alchemist's art receives little discussion*—it is a dark and insidious aspect, but important to both history and the current age. In hidden labs beneath city streets, apothecaries labor over steaming beakers and bubbling tubes to create drugs and poisons, and they find no shortage of buyers.*

ILLICIT ALCHEMY

INTRODUCTION TO POISONS AND DRUGS IN THE IRON KINGDOMS

While many useful alchemical reagents may be toxic, some are manufactured with no other purpose but to slay or torment the living. Creation of these substances are often seen as immoral, and indeed most civilized nations and the majority religions outlaw the creation and possession of purely toxic alchemical poisons. However what constitutes a "poison" is not always clear, and certain poisonous substances may have other uses, providing a gray area in the law for alchemists to exploit. Despite this, the nations of Khador, Ord, and especially Cryx depend upon tools like these for their own spies and agents. Covert agents of the Ordic crown call upon contacts to supply them with the poisons they need to assassinate dangerous enemies, Cryxian agents poison officers and potentially pesky bureaucrats the night before a major raid, and Queen Vanar's spies eagerly trade gold for truth serum to further their cause. Poisons are certainly dangerous, but in the right hands they can be applied as weapons in valid and moral causes. Many alchemists are patriots, laboring for their country's agents. Doing so rarely pays all the bills, however, so if they can offload items to an adventurer or mercenary, so much the better.

Despite the fact that the canny individual might locate sellers in any town with an apothecary, few adventurers or mercenaries make regular use of poisons. Use or even possession of illicit alchemical poisons is often worth jail time in Cygnar, public execution in Khador, and the wrack in the Protectorate, so carrying them is risky. Some alchemical creations, though very close to poison—such as Tearjerker gas, Stinging Dust, and Dust of Dizziness (IKCG, pp 307 - 313)—are not illegal and find use in the modern adventurer's arsenal. Those seeking illegal and potent poisons can find them for sale among the black markets of Five Fingers, including the morally-flexible alchemists found in Crucible Alley on Dicer's Isle. Prices on these substances can vary widely and may include an extra surcharge to represent the risk to the seller.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF POISONS AND DRUGS IN WESTERN IMMOREN

The dark side of alchemy has been a staple of political machinations and covert operations dating back thousands of years. Over the course of history, poisons and drugs have gone from being valued methods of extracting military information, available only to the privileged and government-sanctioned few, to more easily manufactured and distributed than ever before. What once was the singular prevue of esoteric specialists under the patronage of warlords has become a science in which any university-trained student might dabble.

THE THOUSAND CITIES ERA (1930 BR – 600 BR)

Though the earliest known book on alchemy appears in 1100 BR, by one Voldu Grova, assassin's poisons were undoubtedly prominent throughout the Thousand Cities era. In fact, this time was the heyday of such poisons, and they would never again see such widespread use and importance as they achieved in the Thousand Cities era.

This was a time of conflict, of brutal battles and mighty warlords. Indeed, these warlords were so mighty that killing them through conventional means—a horselord's axe to the head on a battlefield—held far less certainty. Instead, rival nations, tribes, and groups turned to assassination to provide timely deaths of their enemies, and assassins made heavy use of poisons.

For poisoners in the Thousand Cities era, a key problem was that intended victims were often wealthy and hearty warlords. These people had excellent constitutions, a staff of poison-tasters, and enough paranoia to make them difficult targets. Assassins devised many ways to overcome this problem. Perhaps the most effective was Bedcorpse Dust, still in use today by organizations like the Broken Coast Brotherhood. Made from the crushed and dried spores of several native southern plants, an assassin places a dose of the poison in a paper tube. When he blows on the tube, the dust exits in a cloud. An assassin would slip into a warlord's stronghold at night and breathe the dust into the victim's face. Since the victim spent all night breathing the poison, even his hale nature wasn't enough to prevent death. His concubine—who was fortunate to be sleeping facing the other direction—arose to find a corpse at her side, providing the poison with its name.

THE ORGOTH OCCUPATION ERA (600 BR – 201 AR)

Like all other sciences, poison and drug concoction stagnated during the Orgoth invasion. Scattered texts recovered from Orgoth ruins — mostly journals kept by budding Immorese alchemists — hint that the Orgoth brought their own poisons with them across the seas. Modern alchemists know nothing about these poisons, but the ancient accounts speak of them causing agony and vile disfigurement.

Alchemy saw its main advances at the end of this era, when the Rebellion reached its peak. At this point, almost all alchemists were members of the Golden Crucible, and they developed blasting powders, early mechanika, and useful acids. These alchemists, guided by Morrowan doctrine, didn't seek to create new poisons except to seek antidotes to those employed by their enemy. Mechanikal and alchemical invention also led to a number of useful industrial substances which happen to be toxic to living tissues, a fact exploited by certain poisoners.

MODERN TIMES (202 AR – PRESENT)

At the signing of the Corvis Treaties, the newly-formed Iron Kingdoms outlined special and often severe punishments for murder by poison as a means to prevent its use in political ascendancy, but the alchemical training that can produce such poisons is widespread. As a result, the knowledge of how to create illicit substances is secret but pervasive. Adventurers who know the right places can attain poisons more easily than ever before, and with proper training can use them proficiently.

POISONED WEAPONS

Some have trained to maximize poisons used on weapons. These must be contact or injury poisons. It is not normally possible to apply poisons to small arms ammunition as the poison will not endure the firing process.

POISONED WEAPON PROFICIENCY [GENERAL FEAT]

You are an expert in using poison with your chosen weapon and your expertise in alchemy allows you to maximize the delivery of the poison to your victim.

Prerequisite: Craft (alchemy) 4 ranks, BAB +2

Benefit: When applying or using poison with a weapon, you never risk accidentally poisoning yourself. Furthermore, if attacking with a poisoned weapon in which you have Weapon Focus, add +2 to the poison's DC to resist.

EXAMPLE POISONS AND DRUGS

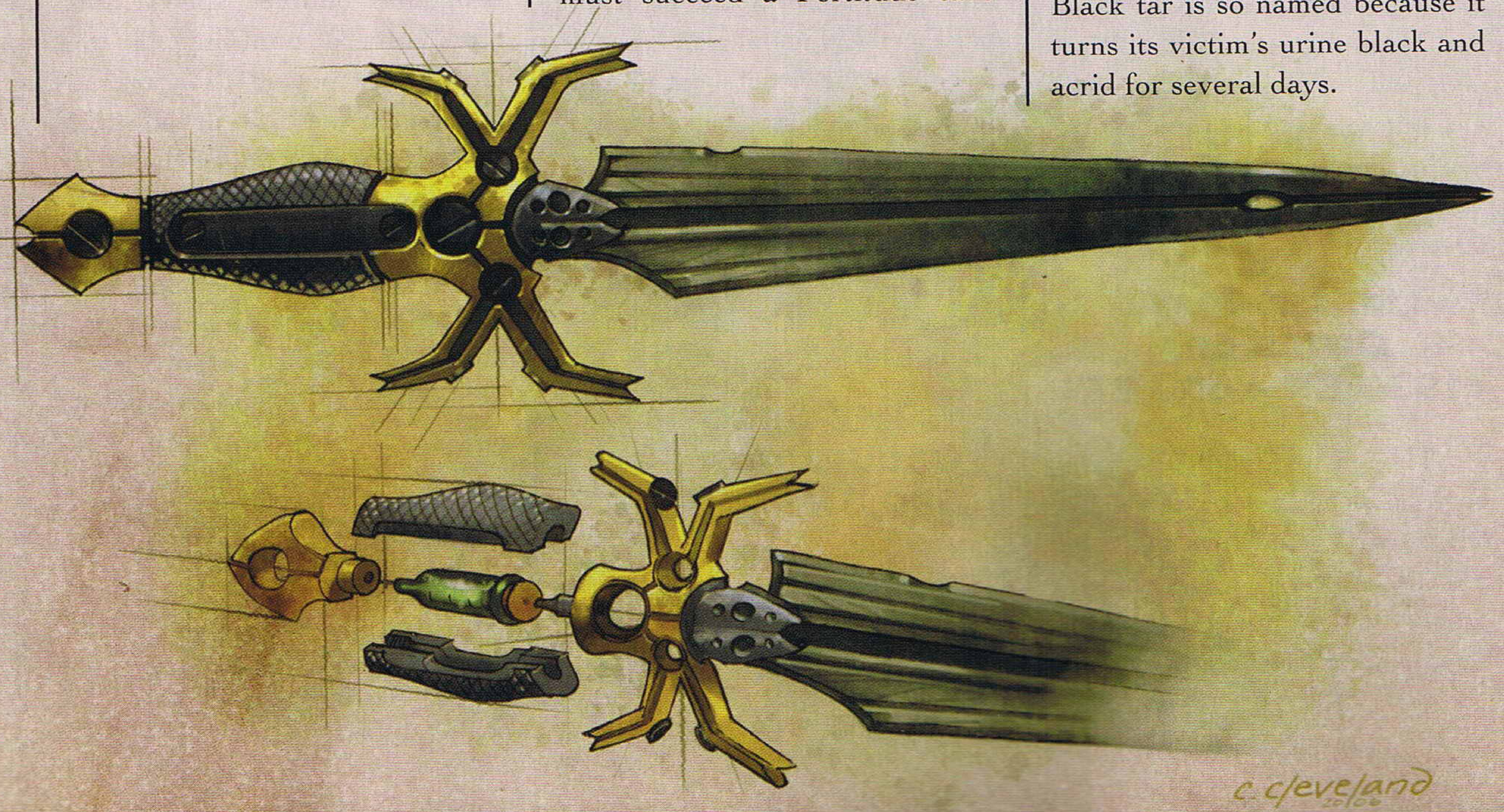
A poison has a debilitating and often painful effect, while a drug has a more specialized use, and generally a slower onset time. An injection that could kill or cripple someone is a poison, while one that compels him to speak the truth or forget certain memories is a drug.

Greylord's Serum: A secret formula of the Greylord alchemists, this drug is sometimes employed in Khador to assist in questioning and interrogating subjects, particularly in cases where stronger arcane means to force the truth are not desirable. Some judges do not approve of arcane methods to force confessions and believe this alchemical solution provides more trustworthy results. This subtle substance lowers the victim's ability to organize his thoughts and makes him more susceptible to intimidation.

This drug is either swallowed or injected and has a one hour onset time, after which the victim must succeed a Fortitude save (DC 22). Failure indicates he is subject to a -10 penalty to Bluff skill checks and a -4 penalty to saves against fear over the next 1d4 hours. Multiple doses are not cumulative but a new dose can be administered at most once per hour to a target believed to be resisting, requiring another save. Those under the influence of this substance are groggy and generally have slurred speech, similar to the effects of alcohol inebriation.

Faint enchantment; DC 20; CL 3rd;Craft (alchemy) 6; Greylord society feat; Price 100 gp.

Black Tar: If you want to find any array of drugs and poisons, Five Fingers is the place to go. Five Fingers's pirates and spies in particular are known for lacing drinks with black tar, a thick distillation of various plant syrups which is still used as crude aesthetic by mercenary surgeons. A few mugs of black tar beer and a customer is on the floor, allowing the pirates to drag him aboard their ship to interrogate him, to sell him to Black Ogrun slavers, or simply ransom him back to his family. This abuse is known as "blackening" the individual. Black tar is so named because it turns its victim's urine black and acrid for several days.



A character must ingest black tar for it to affect him. An hour after ingestion, he makes a Fortitude save (DC 13, +2 for each dose of black tar consumed in the past hour). Failure indicates he drops into a dreamless sleep for 2d4 hours. The only way to awaken a sleeping victim is through lethal or nonlethal damage, and even then the victim does not awake unless he makes a Will save (DC 20, –1 per point of damage dealt).

None (nonmagical); DC 20; CL NS; price 50 gp per dose.

Heartstopper: Heartstopper is perhaps the most deadly poison in the Iron Kingdoms. In 739 BR, after failing several attempts to assassinate the corrupt Mikhail Ordonna, renowned Khadoran assassin Nikolai "the Spider" Andrevich slew his poisoner in frustration and set about creating his own poison. He entered the poisoner's lab and mixed a variety of lesser poisons — some natural, some not. Distrusting the poisoner's materials as well as his craft, Andrevich added a touch of cleaning fluid from the maid's closet. The result was a thick liquid, black with an oily gray sheen.

Excited, Andrevich again entered Mikhail Ordonna's stronghold, this time gripping his custom-made blade filled with the new poison. Ordonna had grown canny, however, and waiting guards captured Andrevich. Ordonna threw the assassin in the dungeons, and used Andrevich's dagger to execute another prisoner. The poison worked quickly; the man's heart weakened and stopped, and he was dead within a minute. Impressed, Ordonna offered to pardon Andrevich if the assassin swore fealty. Andrevich agreed, and for the next two decades helped Ordonna become one of the most feared horselords of the era. Today the formula of its creation—involving many rare and difficult to create lesser poisons—is a well kept secret known only a few alchemists. The only antitoxin effective against heartstopper is that derived from the tatzylwurm (IKCG, pg. 306).

None (nonmagical); injury; initial and secondary damage 2d6 Con; DC 26; CL NS; price 3,100 gp per dose.

Poisons/Drugs

Name	Onset[1]	Type	Initial Damage	Secondary Damage	Price
Bedcorpse	1 hour	Inhaled DC 20	1 Con2	3d6 Con	2,200 gp
Black tar	1 hour	Ingested DC 13	Unconciousness	Unconsciousness for 2d4 hours	50 gp
Greylords Serum		1 hour	Ingested & -4 Fear saves	-10 Bluff checks	NA 100 gp
Heartstopper	Instant	Injury DC 17	2d6 Con	2d6 Con	3,100 gp

[1] Onset is the amount of time that must pass before the initial damage effects the victim.
[2] Permanent drain, not temporary damage.

UNCOVERING THE ORGOTH

By Nathan Letsinger Art By Brian Snoddy & Scott Fischer

The Orgoth. The name rings with dread for many Immorese. The savage invaders of a millennia ago enslaved a continent, destroyed centuries of knowledge, and ruled as brutal tyrants for centuries. Even after they were driven off they corrupted the land and blasted their buildings to ruins in the Scourge. The common man will sign a prayer to Morrow if he even hears them mentioned. While many may be happy to forget the past, a brave few make investigating the past their career. For these intrepid souls the name brings not fear but the thrill of danger and adventure.

THE ORGOTH LEGACY

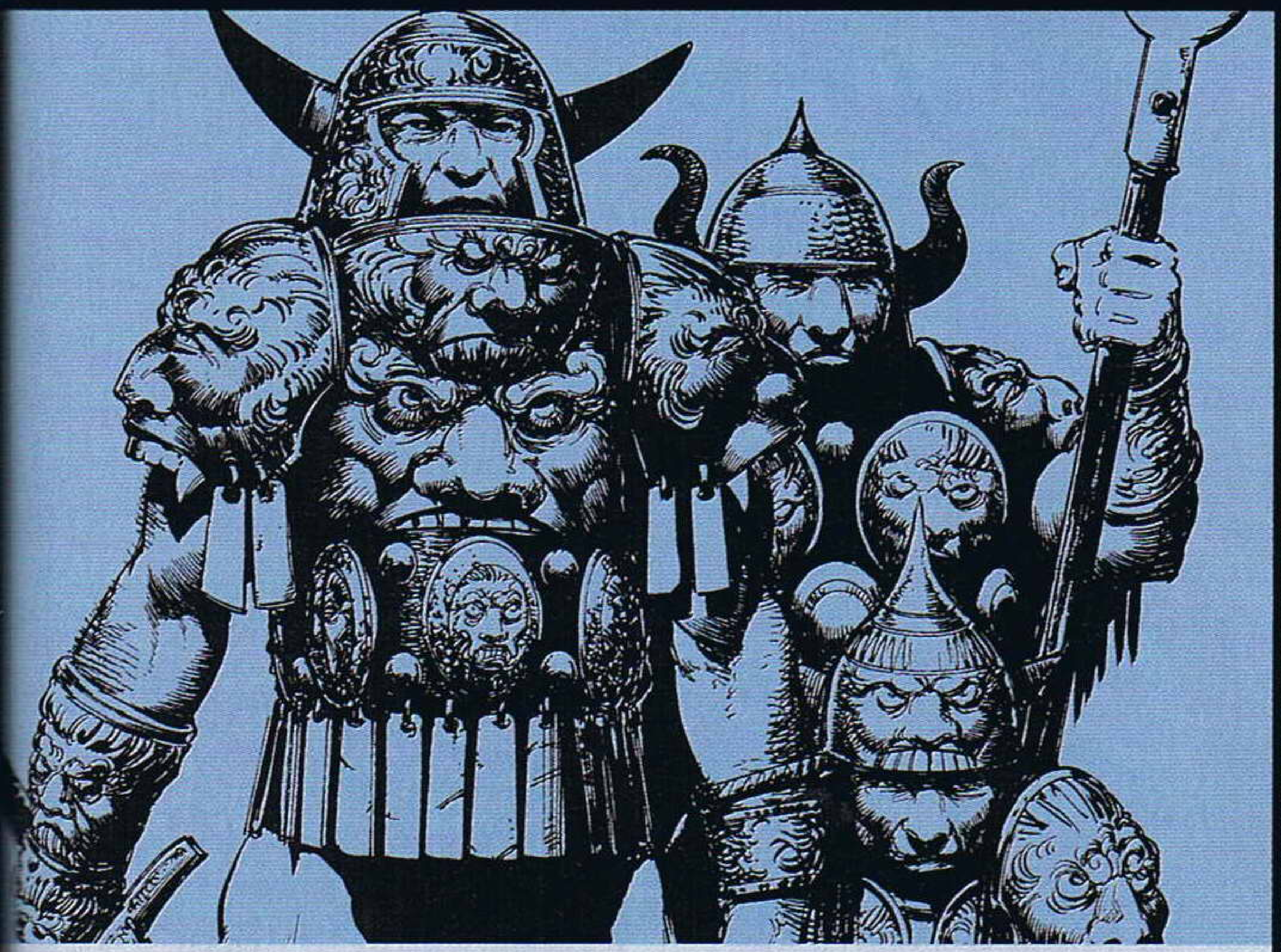
"The secrets of the Tyrants await discovery, festering in dark places across the kingdoms like maggots in a corpse. Let us find them, you and I ..."

—Master Necrotech Mortenebra, regarding a scholar's skull before coaxing forth its knowledge

The Orgoth first landed on the shores of western Immoren in 600 BR. Over the next two hundred years their massive armies consolidated their stranglehold on the continent. Described at the time more like demons than mortal men, the invaders brought previously unfamiliar dark magic to bear in their conquest. With the help of hundreds of thousands of captured Immorese slaves, Orgoth engineers erected towering fortifications of black stone, tunneled extensive catacombs, and built bizarre temples bearing crude runes and leering faces. The exact significance of the favored black stone preferred by the Orgoth remains a mystery, as do the sacrificial rites undertaken in black temples and halls.

As the Iron Alliance and its undefeatable Colossals drove them from the land, the Orgoth destroyed nearly every one of their strongholds, salted every field, burned every document, felled every tower and fortress lest they fall to enemy hands. In the process they caused a wake of starvation, famine, and exposure across the region. This is known as the Scourge. By 201 AR it seemed little remained of these oppressors, but evidence of the Orgoth persists in catacombs under ruined cities, sealed vaults, and cavern complexes far from the battlefields. The sheer scope of Orgoth holdings made it impossible for them to completely eradicate their presence. It is these dungeons that draw the speculation of scholars, the greed of collectors and the gold-lust of would be treasure hunters.

FINDING ORGOTH DUNGEONS



CITIES

Many cities of western Immoren are built on Orgoth foundations. These cities often also house hidden vaults of Orgoth warlords or noble families. The largest strongholds oversaw the provinces whose borders were later used to demark the boundaries between Khador, Llael, Ord, and Cygnar. While these strongholds were annihilated, it was a mark of pride for the Immorese to rebuild atop them, burying their oppressors below the earth. This was the case in Merin, the capital city of Ord, as well as Khardov in Khador, which boasts an enormous mining complex formerly exploited by the Tyrants. Other cities such as Five Fingers have extensive catacombs where the Orgoth had an important navy base and maintained a prison and torture complex for the interrogation of rebel wizards. While many such chambers are empty, some may hold undead servants and guards following the will of long destroyed tyrants. Some say several sunken longships of the Orgoth rest at the bottom of the Bay of Stone west of Five Fingers and south of Carre Dova. Khador boasts a number of other significant Orgoth finds, including in the ruins near New Vroggen, and certain barrows and tunnels outside Skrovenberg.

WILDERNESS

Across the wilderness regions of western Immoren there are likely a number of Orgoth dungeons left untouched by the Scourge. Even in death the Orgoth are feared, as they have a reputation for not passing easily into the afterlife, but often lingering on as unliving animated corpses or spectral ghosts.

The **Wyrmwall Mountains** contain many unexplored regions and it is known the Orgoth maintained several significant fortresses among its peaks, particularly northwest and southwest of Caspia, the one human city they could never subdue. These ruins provide homes for opportunistic bogrin tribes which might be willing to trade for any relics they possess or a variety of even less savory creatures that will not. Talented in shaping stone, the particularly savage trollkin of the Wyrmwall sometimes build their villages on stones from the ruins of black stone favored by the Orgoth. They look unfavorably on intruders so adventurers may have to fight to wrest any such relics, such as enchanted weapons, from their cold dead fingers.

An uncompromising land, the **Westinmarsh** includes several abandoned Orgoth ruins, including most notably Henge Hold. The cyclopean "hanging stones" that gave Henge Hold its name were used to build one of the first Orgoth strongholds. It was also one of the last to fall during the Rebellion. Some say the dark stones here burn the flesh of those who touch them and that the large, now-toppled henge stones weep blood.

Rumors persist of Orgoth holds abandoned whole on various outer Scharde Islands, and Garlghast boasted a particularly important stronghold at Drer Drakkerung and nearby quarries. Few are willing to risk meeting Cryxian pirates or drawing the ire of lich lords like Terminus by lingering in these areas. Those who are brave enough might ply the sailors of Five Fingers, Highgate, or even Blackwater to learn what they have witnessed on these isles.

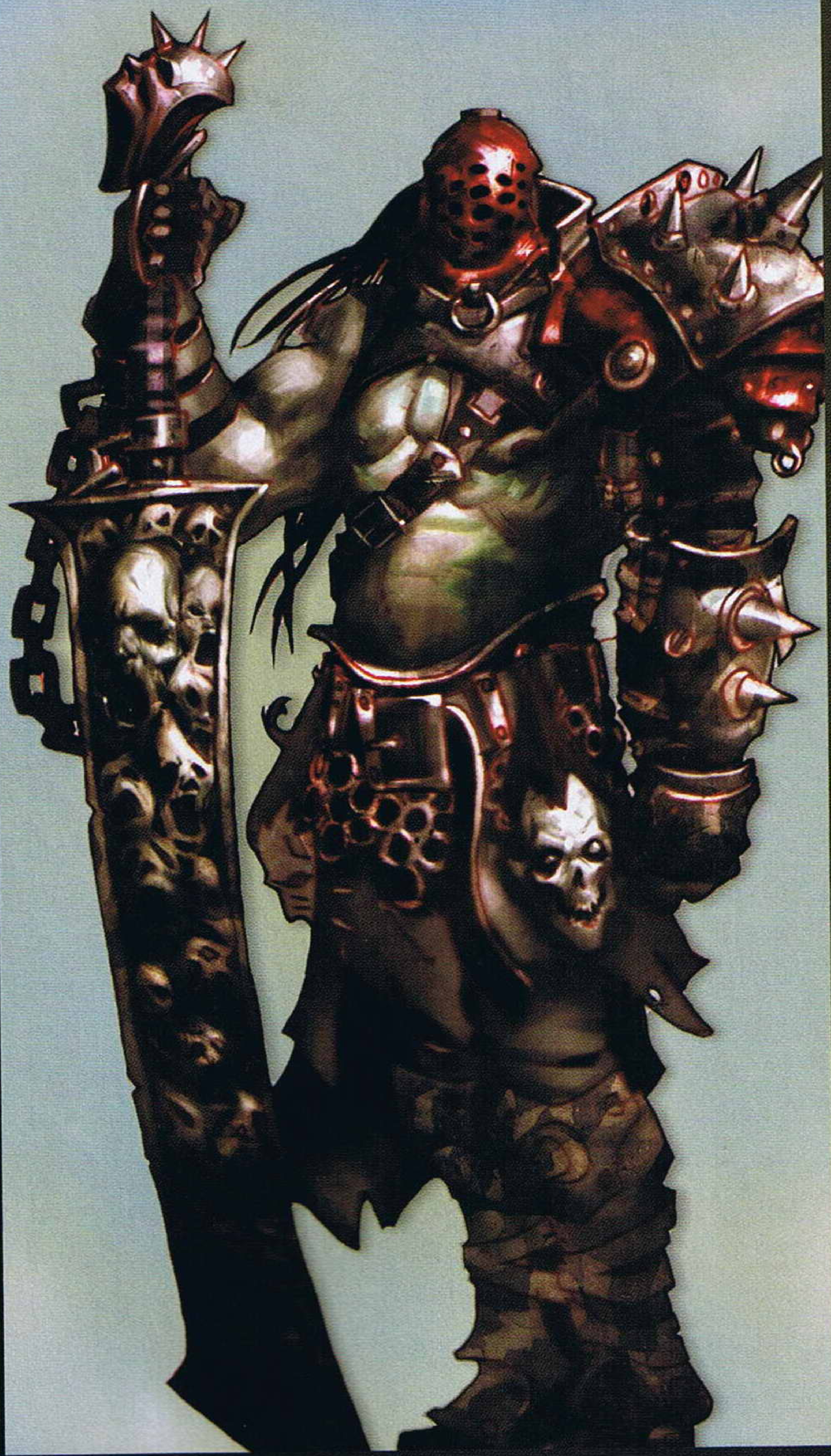
DESIGNING ORGOTH DUNGEONS

GMs wishing to use Orgoth dungeons in their campaign should make use of the following notes; while exceptions exist most fall within these guidelines. Ruins, Caverns, and Vaults present different challenges to PCs. A ruin near the PCs' city can make for a perfect place for low level adventures to clear out raiding farrow, army deserters turned bandits, or Ogrun slaver camps, for example. Orgoth military cavern complexes, now long deserted, provide excellent homes to nocturnal beasts such as gorax, bone-sucking vermin like crypt spiders, as well as undead such as shaft wights. Extensive vaults provide excellent mid-level challenges with their array of deadly traps and dangerous undead guardians such as dread or excruciators. At higher levels PCs can be confronted with greater challenges when other groups of treasure-hunters such as Greylords, Cryxian agents, or an iron lich.

RUINS

The maze-like remains of a once great city, a dark shrine, or the worn foundations of massive keep razed by dark magic, Orgoth ruins dot the landscape in many areas of western Immoren, but are most prominent in western Cygnar, Ord and Khador. Llael boasts the fewest large ruins, as there were few major fortresses and monolithic structures built to control this province during the Occupation. However, there are rumors of several small ruins near the approach to the dwarven fortress of Holgenhold, where the Orgoth mustered for their failed attack on Rhul.

Many ruins are just that, a few low stone walls blasted black and covered in centuries of overgrowth. Treasure seekers must strike out for more massive ruins instead, those whose labyrinth structures have been ignored or avoided by fearful locals and still hide ancient treasures. Remote ruins such as those in the Wyrmwall may provide a home to tribes of bogrin, farrow, and other creatures seeking shelter. Any traps the Orgoth might have left in such ruins have been set off or dismantled. Scholars have noted that ruins comprised largely of their favored black stone are always bereft of the usual ghosts and spirits one might expect to haunt these dire places. The presence of even the most ruined of their blackened shrines leaves a stillness to the air and a chill on the earth. The superstition persists among adventurers that dying in these places presents similar hazards as being slain by an Infernal, where one's soul is cursed and unable to pass on to the afterlife.



Structure

With advanced engineering and near endless slave labor, Orgoth structures were built to withstand the withering of both war and time—only the dark magic of the Orgoth or the power of the Colossals could hope to bring down their fortresses. The exterior walls of a fortress are made of great slabs of nearly impenetrable dark stone [3' thick, Break DC 60, Hardness 8, Hit Points 700 hp, Climb DC 22] with no windows and usually huge iron doors bearing the leering faces characteristic of Orgoth architecture. While finding alternative entry to a ruined fortress is usually easy, massive outer doors can prove obstinate [20% chance of being stuck] and many require the activation of often ruined gear-works to open them [3" thick, Hardness 10, 90 hp, Stuck DC 30, Locked DC 28]. At the GMs discretion, a Bodger may attempt to bodge ancient gear-works if they are not too ruined to allow the activation of doors, draw bridges, or lifts inside a ruin. The workings themselves are not complex but require time, tools, and a fair amount of luck to start running again.

Dangers and Difficulties

Orgoth ruins are often littered with loose rock, varying from blasted masonry to sharp broken hunks of marble. [This rubble adds 2 to Balance and Tumble checks and 2 to Move Silently checks. The loose and failing interior masonry walls (1' thick, break DC 25, Hardness 8, Hit Points 45) are often easy to climb with a DC of 15 (with ledges) or 20 (smooth) but failing your check by 10 not only causes you to fall but you bring down a portion of the wall on top of you for 1d6 hit points of damage per 10' the stone work falls.]

VAULTS

Hardest to find and most dangerous to explore, Orgoth vaults are sealed chambers and repositories designed to preserve their contents for extended periods of time. These hold the greatest promise for intact treasure as they are likely untouched by looters, until now. Vaults were built to protect their valuables and the bodies of esteemed dead. Forgotten vaults are always protected by still-deadly traps and often by undead guardians.

Structure

Almost all of these vaults are underground, either hidden deep below ruins of a fortress or set into mountain walls. A ruin or cave complex may have been explored for decades without interlopers discovering the more valuable vault, sometimes behind thick secret walls nearly impossible to detect. Vault hallways are lined with carved howling faces, whose leering eyes and flaring nostrils easily hide dart, arrow, or gas traps in the leering eyes. Thick mason walls are nearly smooth where there are no faces are carved and are almost always reinforced by embedded with iron bars and the bones of those sacrificed to bless the chambers [2' thick, Break DC 45, Hardness 8, 180 hp, climb 20]. Secret doors within a vault are not uncommon but their concealment is not always subtle, often taking the form of wall sized learning face or made of the black marble common in military complexes [Search DC 22]—these doors are sometimes sealed shut by arcane means (such as arcane lock). Vaults used as crypts of the dead often begin with long halls lined with alcoves. In each alcove houses the skeletal remains of a guard, often in full armor, sealed in the tomb with their liege. A hall's walls are lined with blacked bones that can only be the remains of the hundreds of slaves sacrificed in the blessing of the crypt. Many treasure seekers have encountered the dread (MN1), undead guardians whose bodies are infused with living iron, in tombs of the richest of the dead.

Dangers and Difficulties

Freshly discovered Orgoth vaults will always have functioning traps. The Orgoth favored mechanical traps, many whose purpose is no more subtle than to maim and disfigure those intruders who are not killed outright. Traps encountered include poisoned arrows, darts and spears, wall blades, whirling blades, falling blocks, tripping chains sending the unwary into spiked pits, sprays of acid, or fogs of poison gas. That is not to say encountering magical traps is impossible, but those are rare cases reserved for the most valued treasures and corpses of significant rulers, often in an inner sanctum past the outer wards. It's also common for the Orgoth to layer traps such that the more obvious overt traps are combined with those more difficult to spot, as a means of lulling would-be thieves into a false sense of security. An example being an obvious pressure-trigger plate just before a much better disguised pit trap to catch those stepping past the former.

The poisons used on darts, arrows, and spears are now centuries old but have not lost much of their potency. In some tombs Orgoth trapmakers would apply a wash to the walls and ceiling of a tomb. By the heat of treasure-hunters' torches, this wash sublimates into a dangerous odorless gas. After a short time horrible hallucinations begin to plague the victim as the flickering shadows elongate and take on demonic shapes. [Nightmare Sublimate, inhaled DC 15, initial damage: 1d4 Wisdom, secondary: as per confusion.]

CAVERN COMPLEXES

The Orgoth military used natural cavern complexes as bases, barracks, and even temporary headquarters until permanent strongholds could be erected. Caves near Orgoth ruins often betray signs of former Orgoth use, containing chambers roughly hewn into larger rooms or walled with masonry. Cavern complexes in Llael, in northern Cygnar, and eastern Khador were often used as found. Those in western Cygnar, Khador, and Ord will include more chambers of worked stone mixed with the natural caverns.

Structure

These complexes often left the walls as raw stone, widening where necessary, but set the floors with flagstones and masonry, creating mile-long underground fortress barracks or prison complexes. Some complexes are made of both worked and unworked stone, with deeper and nearly inaccessible caverns disappearing into unexplored darkness.

Dangers and Difficulties

Natural caverns have areas of uneven stone floors [making running and charging impossible and increasing balance and tumble checks by 5] and are often littered with rubble. The cool and often wet interior may hide several species of vermin and animals such as bog constrictors, devil rats, and swarms of razorbats. In flooded mines and prisons, the ancient bones of hundreds of slaves form the aquatic horrors known as boneswarms—waiting silently under the dark waters, tempting treasure hunters with glimpses of their former master's gold before pulling them to a watery doom. It isn't uncommon for other underground dwellers such as shaft wights, dregg, or cephalyx to break through walls, connecting Orgoth chambers to other lairs and tunnels.

TREASURES

THE ART OF TREASURE HUNTING

> *"We awoke the next morning to find our hired Khadoran guide and laborers gone, and missing with them the Orgoth coins we uncovered the day before. Professor Pendrake groused about tracking down the thieves, but the greedy fools left behind something better. Though burned and water damaged, the tome they left was worth a thousand times those tarnished coins."*
>
> —Professor Jarrod Hlal, Corvis University, deceased

Appraising the value of Orgoth relics can be difficult. Choosing between grabbing a rune-covered skull or a golden idol before the vault door seals your doom can make the all the difference in a successful hunt. Characters must depend on a keen intellect and historical lore to give an edge in deciding what items will bring the most coin.

Rare historic items such as coins, weapons, and military paraphernalia require a DC 15 to 18 appraise check to determine their value. On failure those without any idea of their scholarly appeal may only value the item as its modern day equivalent (silver coin, equivalent weapon, or value of stone or metal). Esoteric historic items such as tomes, blackdrake rifles, journals, maps, or anything thought lost to the Scourge requires a DC 18 to 22 appraise check. Failure means you cannot estimate the value. Characters with 5 ranks in Knowledge (history) gain a +2 bonus on Appraise checks to estimate the value of rare or esoteric historic items. Adventuring Scholars specializing in the Orgoth as their Field of Study may also apply their field specialist, field scholar, and field master bonuses to appraisal checks.

GMs can treat the discovery of esoteric items, such as a Fell weapon or particularly reveling excruciator journals, as a sort of legendary relic on which to base a whole campaign. In no case should these exotic items be used as random treasure.

FINDING A BUYER

Treasure hunters would do well to know exactly to whom they plan to sell their relics. The gray-traders and fences of the black market have little interest in historic artifacts and may only give a pittance for such items. Trying to sell reminders of an ancestor's oppression to common folk will only garner scorn and superstition. Some effort to seek out scholars or private collectors will be required to get full value for these items.

Arguable the best places to find a buyer is in a city that hosts a major university, as such places are the home of nobles, scholars, and collectors interested in such treasures. The Iron Kingdoms boasts several centers of major learning, including the Royal Cygnaran University, Corvis University, the University of Mercir, the Merywyn Academy, the Merin School of Learned Sciences, or Fredek University at Ceryl—which is more favorably inclined toward occult items than its larger rival, Ceryl University. Not every university has an expert in the Orgoth studies as the study sometimes carries with it a dubious reputation among scholars. Some potential buyers are put-off by the hazards of dealing in Orgoth items as they are rumored to be often cursed, although only the superstitious pay heed to such concerns. All of the major wizard orders also have an interest in these items and may serve as potential buyers.

The best known open collectors of Orgoth relics include Vystral, the proprietor of Exotic Oddities in Clocker's Cove (IKWG, p. 163), Professor Lorant Neci of the Merin School of Learned Sciences (MN1, p. 223), Castellan and High Magus Lorcan Dromore of Merin (IKWG, pp. 304-305), Great Prince Aeniv Rolonovik, ruler of Khardoska (IKWG, p. 213), and a mysterious cloaked being named Deryliss who can be contacted in Blackwater (IKWG, p. 325), port city of Cryx.

ORGOTH ARCANA [GENERAL]

The character's knowledge of Orgoth culture gives him an eye for uncovering hidden treasures and their value.

Prerequisites: Field of Study in the Orgoth

Benefit: The character gains +3 to Appraise checks to determine the value of Orgoth relics and +3 to Search checks to find hidden relics or secret doors.

RELIC SEEKER [GENERAL]

The character has a great knowledge of the Orgoth and how to avoid their traps.

Prerequisites: Field of Study in the Orgoth, Trapfinding

Benefit: The character may add his Field Specialist, Field Scholar, or Field Master bonus to Search checks or Disarm Device checks involving Orgoth traps.

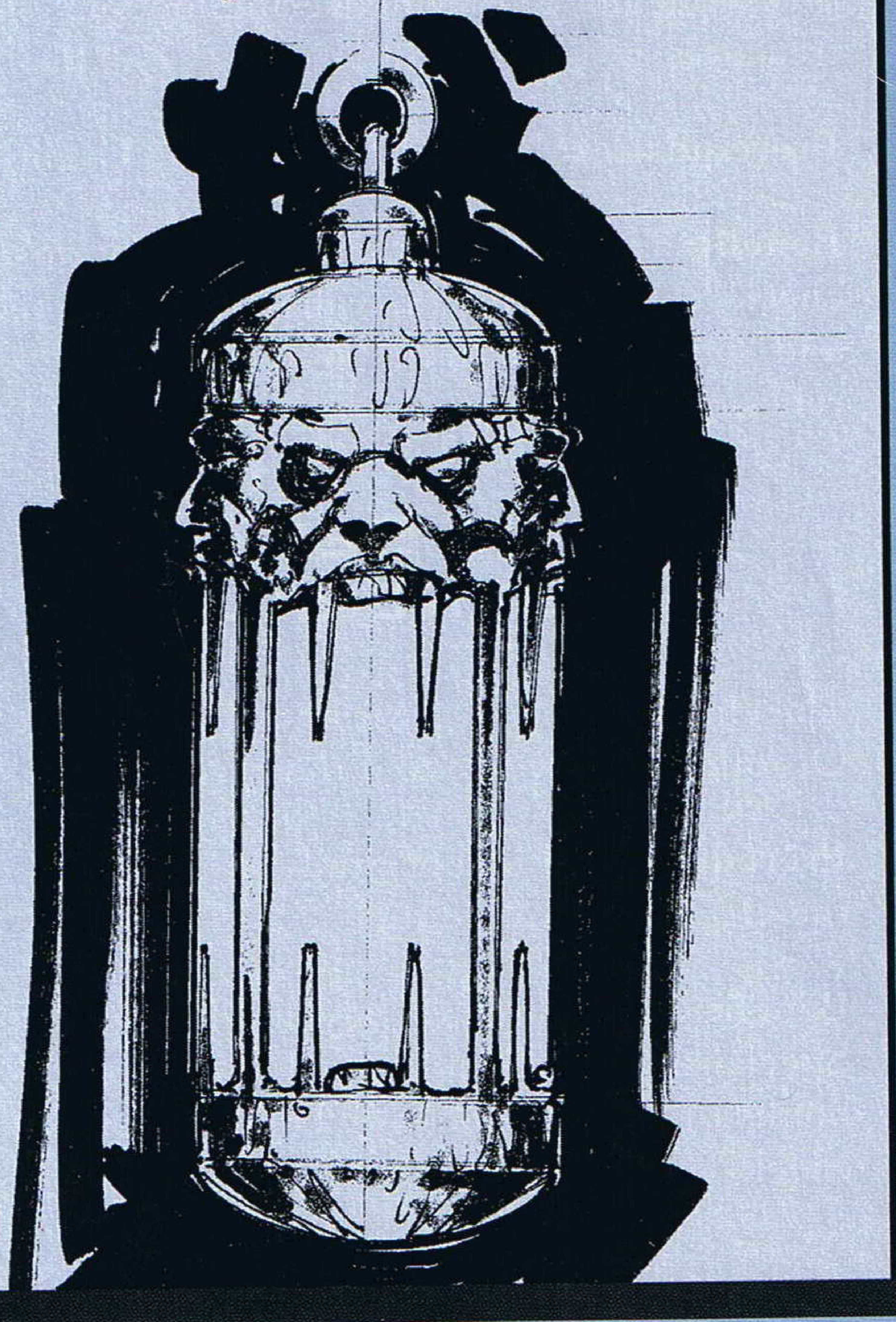
SAMPLE TREASURES

Treasures found in an Orgoth dungeon depend on the original use of the dungeon and how intact it may be. Old artifacts, even if otherwise worthless can command an impressive fee among the intelligentsia of the Iron Kingdoms.

Coins, Silver & Gold

Long and flat and marked with Orgoth runes, fingers of silver were the typical currency in circulation during the time of the Empire. Tarnished and damaged Orgoth silver coins may fetch a few (1-5 gp) Cygnaran crowns to collectors, with rare mint condition coins going for up to twice that amount if an interested collector can be found.

Orgoth gold coins bear a visage on one side, generally the current emperor or the governor of an enslaved province. These coins are rarely found in quantity except in sealed and trap infested vaults containing tombs of important Orgoth. To interested collectors or university museum curators undamaged coins may fetch up to a score of Cygnaran crowns (20 gp) while worn specimens are worth less (2-10 gp.) as long as some features are left unblemished. Otherwise these impure golden wheels fetch only a crown apiece based on weight.



Golden Idols

Thought to be of religious significance, these idols bear the howling visages often seen on the armor, weapons, and architecture of Orgoth shrines and temples. Melted down the impure gold can be sold for 45 crowns per pound but to collectors these hand held idols can go for three that amount. Exotic larger versions might fetch up to five times their weight in gold.

Marble Icons

Almost all military dwellings have at least one black marble slab with an icon etched into the stone, or sometimes inlaid with copper. Often a leering face on a field of stars is carved into the black marble, thought to be the symbol of the Empire. These icons do not hold any magic and are found in sizes varying from one square foot for distant outposts to massive wall sized affairs in a central stronghold. Smaller slabs fetch 100 gp if undamaged, but can be difficult to remove. The extremely heavy large slabs—which are rarely intact—can sell for up to 5,000 gp in the rare case that it is undamaged, though transporting such a slab would be costly. Finding a buyer might require persistence as many scholars insist that ownership of these marble slabs results in bad luck for their owners, pointing to gruesome deaths of previous owners including Corvis University's late Professor Hlal whose body was found in the river showing signs of having been spitted in the same fashion preferred by the Orgoth.

Masks

Strange masks have been found among the Orgoth ruins, particularly in burial vaults, and the use of these items is debated. They do not appear to have been the province of military leaders or governors, rarely found on the most honored dead. Instead, they seem linked to Orgoth scholars or arcane practitioners. Excruciators are always found bearing these masks, fabricated of thick and uncomfortable metal. In several instances those foolishly donning these masks have found themselves possessed by malignant forces, although some insist this is a matter of learning how to master their powers.

Weapons and Armor

Those Orgoth armor and weapons which have resisted decay are always masterworks, and in some cases are enchanted. Scholars postulate that certain arcane weapons have lost their power over time, and there may be rites or ceremonies to restore them to full power, likely involving blood sacrifice or the offerings of souls. Orgoth weapons and armor are usually of blackened steel, incorporating obsidian stones and copper runes and ornamentation. In some cases the spiteful Orgoth have coated these items in contact poison to inflict suffering or death on would-be thieves. Regardless of other properties, Orgoth weapons or armor will usually fetch two times their normal value by type, and often can be sold for more.

Enchanted Orgoth weapons sometimes manifest unusual side-effects. This can include (but is not limited to) the following:

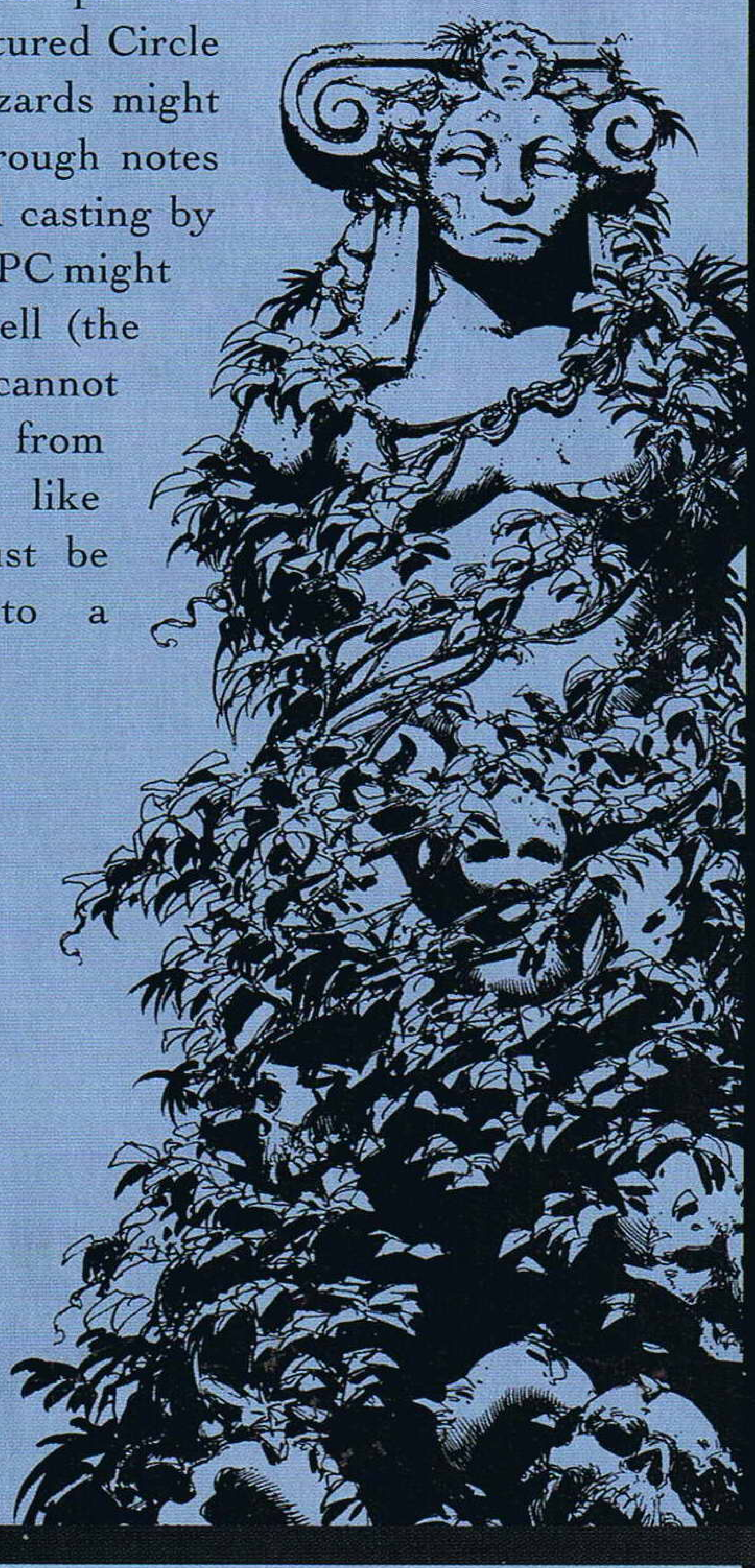
- Weapon surrounded by dark aura when drawn
- Resists being sheathed or released until a foe has been slain (can be sheathed, but with noticeable resistance)
- Weapon leaps eagerly from sheath when drawn
- Weapon whispers or mutters incomprehensible words when drawn
- Weapon takes extra effort to remove from slain foe
- Weapon soaks up blood

A number of 'cursed' Orgoth weapons and armor bring doom, insanity, infertility, or other fates on wielders. One confirmed case of powerful Orgoth weapons with consistent side-effects are the so-called "Fell Blades" utilized by the Khadoran military in the employ of their horrific Doom Reavers, former prisoners turned berserkers who are driven mad by the whisperings of their powerfully enchanted blades.

Writings

Very rare, each Orgoth text is unique and exotic—making its value priceless. The most morally repugnant Tyrants texts are not written by the Orgoth themselves but their undead servants, the Excruciators. These wraith-like interrogators were capable of extracting confessions and knowledge from even the most hardened men. Versed in many languages these malicious beings keep journals of their interrogations—bound in the leathered flesh of their victims, many of which hold valuable information for those rare few who can translate the Orgoth language. While most scholars are reluctant to own such books, the same does not hold for many wizards eager for knowledge. It is believed that many of the early Immorese wizards were captured during the first wars with the Orgoth, and though their secrets were lost to their successors they may be preserved in Excruciator journals.

Treat Excruciator journals as Scholarly Works (MN1 p.223) with a bonus ranging from +1 to +6 on a knowledge topics related to the particular journal's victim. Estimate a value of 500 gp per +1 bonus that the journal provides. Journals of tortured Circle of the Oath wizards might even bear the rough notes on ancient spell casting by which a wizard PC might learn a new spell (the spells within cannot be cast directly from the journal like scrolls and must be transcribed into a spell book.)



GUTS & GEARS

THE MEN AND MACHINES OF WARMACHINE

Written by **Sean Fish** and **Duncan Huffman**, Art by **Brian Snoddy & Chippy**, Rules by **Douglas Seacat**

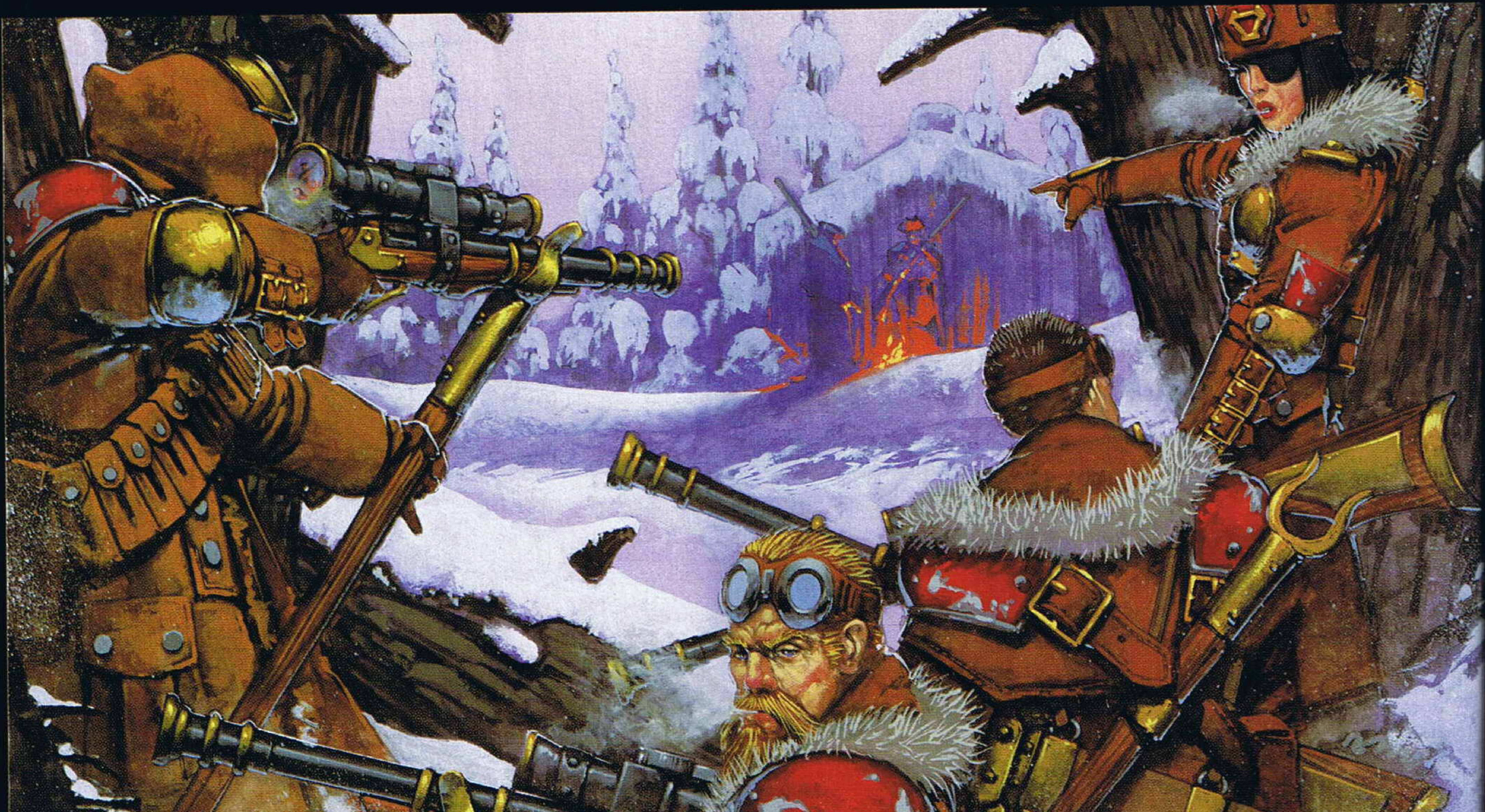
WIDOWMAKERS

Fear is part of being a soldier. With all that war can bring, there is nothing quite like the terror and confusion caused when a sniper strikes. Even amidst the base carnage of war, to see an officer, a comrade, a brother, struck down without warning can be devastating.

The Widowmakers of Khador are elite scouts and snipers who can eliminate enemy officers unseen or disable hulking warjacks with equal ease. The fear and disorder they can cause at a safe distance is legendary. They are one of the most hated and feared weapons in the Khadoran arsenal, a legend in their own country, used as examples of patriotism, skill, and dedication.

Hunting guns of all sorts have been used in the Khadoran military since the army was initiated by King Makaros Taranovi, the Oath-Maker, Khador's first king. It was common for soldiers of old to bring their own firearms with them for service. Early "snipers" were simply skilled marksmen used by officers to harass the pickets of the enemy before battle, and had no official position.

The earliest recorded "sharpshooter regiment" was used in the weeks leading up to the First Thornwood war in 510-511 AR. On King Vygor's orders, Kommander Zavis Kolov requested the best hunters and riflemen from throughout Khador. In conjunction with a detachment



of Kossite woodsmen they swept the Upper Thornwood, killing all Cygnaran scouts and patrols to prepare for the Khadoran invasion. Without their work, the enemy would have learned of the massive build up of 'jacks and men on the border. Kolov divided the riflemen and Kossites into small teams to take advantage of accuracy and stealth. This was unheard of in the Khadoran military where common battlefield wisdom relied on overwhelming the enemy with force.

The success of the tactic was undeniable. Cygnaran scouts and militia at Fellig were so disturbed they blamed the Thornwood itself. Reports were ignored as madness or fatigue. No Khadoran rifleman was ever found and the invasion preparations went on in secrecy.

Despite Khador's ultimate defeat in the war, "Kolov's Widowmakers" were one of the few things that worked well for Khador in the conflict. Kolov first used the moniker in an address to the troops in the aftermath of the war. "We did not reach our goal. But know this; our enemy is not victorious. There are countless widows in Cygnar whose weeping reminds the Southerners of what it costs to face the might of Khador. Take pride in that, my widow-makers..." The name has been used ever since.

This new type of stealthy squad became a perfect fit for the "New Khador" as the kingdom licked its wounds and rebuilt its army. When a new king was crowned, the military leaders began to assemble a plan for an ongoing unit dedicated to sharp shooting, stealth, and survival. By 518 AR the Widowmakers were fully commissioned and operational.

Recruited from all ranks and branches of the military, current Widowmakers are trained in Volningrad at Kolov Academy. Officers nominate those soldiers or trainees who show exceptional talent in sharp shooting. It is a great honor to be chosen for this elite service—entry into the Widowmakers is limited to one hundred and fifty students per year. If they are accepted, the new recruit will spend the next twelve months in rigid training separated from the rest of the army.

None of the normal ceremony and pomp is in practice at Kolov Academy. All recruits are treated equally, with no regard to previous rank or social position. The program at the academy is focused on forging recruits into not only capable riflemen and survivalists, but unquestioning solders willing to eliminate any target, even other Khadorans, if ordered to do so.

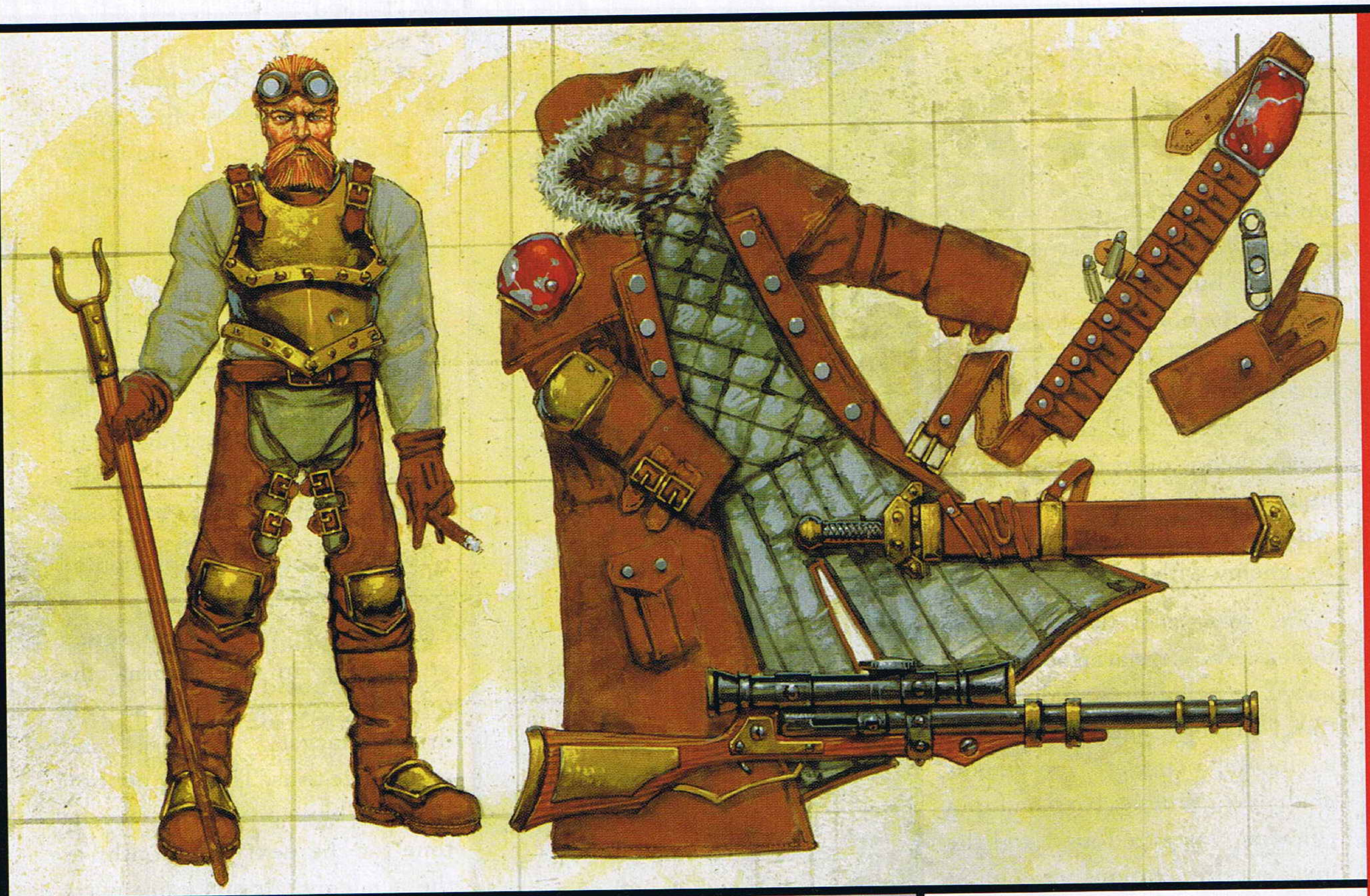
Recruits are divided into four-man teams with five teams assigned to a single seasoned kapitan who serve as their trainer until graduation. Initial weeks are spent in constant physical training and tactics indoctrination, laying the foundations of what will follow. From learning about the assembly of warjacks to learn weak points, to tracking kapitans through the snow, recruits gain the aptitudes that will allow them to survive. This segment of the training begins to cement the concept that they are the best of the best, a breed apart from the rest of the Khadoran military.

After the early weeks, recruits progress to more direct training regarding marksmanship and concentration. Recruits must learn to accurately fire under all conditions. The kapitans will conduct rifle exercises in all weather, adding smoke, noise, lack of sleep, and even other recruits moving into the line of fire. Target acquisition, proper breathing, and positioning are also taught. This develops the Widowmaker's patience and ability to focus on the target to the exclusion of all else.

Early training is supplemented by competition with other four man teams. With each squad attempting to outperform the other in exercises such as rifle drills, target practice, and endurance tests. This competition is fueled by kapitans and sets the tone for the next few months at the academy. At stake are extra rations, letters from home, and precious time off. Squads that excel are rewarded; those who fail suffer.

The weapon used by the modern Widowmakers is a customized Vislovski Hunting Rifle. The pin, lock, and breach components have been made easily replaceable for quick field repairs. The addition of a custom scope and longer rifled barrel help boost the range and accuracy over the standard Khardic hunting guns. Widowmakers can assemble their own ammunition in the field, capable of creating numerous types of loads and shot to fit any target and condition. Each weapon is customized by the owner and is his most valued possession. During training, the penalty for dropping one's weapon or otherwise mistreating it is death.

Not only is advanced marksmanship developed, this is



also a point in the training where the tactics of effectively shooting warjacks are introduced. Heavily armored 'jacks are difficult to take down with normal arms fire. The Widowmakers study and drill to acquire knowledge of the function and assembly of these constructs, learning to focus on specific systems. It is a graduation requirement for every team to disable a charging and battle-ready warjack before it reaches them. Not only is success a requirement, many trainees have lost their lives due to ill placed shots or hesitation under pressure.

Whittling warjacks down with rifle fire is only one function expected of Widowmakers. Reconnaissance, border patrols to snipe foreign spies, and even the practice of killing wounded soldiers to avoid their capture are all part of their charter. Academy discipline is used to harden recruits to be prepared to follow orders under any contingency. A recruit guilty of violating the rules or insubordination is executed by a firing squad comprised of his own team. Every Widowmaker is prepared to eliminate any target at the command of his kapitan, without question.

As indoctrination continues and sharp-shooting training escalates, trainees are introduced to concepts and tactics of stealth, tracking, and camouflage. The ability not only to remain still and undetected, but also to reposition quietly and cover ones tracks are stressed. In an exercise known as "Rabbit and Hound" recruits must evade two of the academy's trained argus hounds while circumnavigating the facility. The infirmary is often full of those who fail to grasp the finer points of evasion.

In the sixth month of training, field exercises begin. Teams are tasked with tracking and capturing competing teams in the forests surrounding the academy. Although no live ammunition is used, teams may use any non-lethal means they can think of to bring the other teams down. Improvisation and creativity are encouraged.

In the final week, in the heart of the Khadoran winter, recruit teams are delivered to remote locations, separate from each other. They are stripped of their overcoats and boots, given no equipment or food of any kind, told simply to return to Kolov Academy. What they are not told is they will be stalked by the kapitans, and two veteran Widowmaker units who will attempt to hinder their approach. All of the skills of survival and conditioning will be put to the test. The first dozen teams to reach the gate graduate; the others are dismissed, returning to the regular army in disfavor. Previous rank is not restored and they are often reassigned to remote and unsavory posts to complete their required service.

Less than fifty percent of each year's trainees will graduate from the program. Upon graduation, they receive a rank and are assigned to a Widowmaker contingent in the field or a newly promoted kapitan. Although they are subject to military hierarchy, the branch is ultimately accountable to and funded by Widowmaker Command at Volningrad, whose Kommandant reports to the High Kommand. Once assigned, the Widowmakers segregate themselves from the rest of the forces; maintaining separate barracks and dining together. They are equipped directly from Volningrad when possible, allowing a higher standard of supplies and rations. It is widely held among the ranks that Widowmakers earn what they get.

When open conflict is not at hand, Widowmaker units are utilized most often in reconnaissance; probing the defenses of Khador's potential enemies. This also involves patrols along the borders to intercept spies and smugglers, supplementing the border forces in places where large numbers of troops cannot be spared. This might also extend to clandestine missions within the interior of another nation.

In times of more active engagement, Widowmaker units are attached to divisions to act as forward scouts, harass enemy supply lines, and eliminate opposing officers as early in an encounter as possible. Most generals will deploy Widowmakers ahead of the main body, holding them until the enemy is distracted by upcoming conflict. Once engaged, a few well-placed shots from hidden positions can destroy the command structure and dismantle battle plans on the spot. This is the time when Widowmaker training in the destruction of warjacks can cripple an enemy before the battle begins. In worst-case scenarios, Widowmakers cover retreats. They can pin down pursuers, keep their troops from capture, and disappear only to redeploy and strike again.

In 605 AR, as the invasion of Llael began, the Widowmakers were called on to keep the advance of the main army secret. Llael had outposts and signal towers along Llael's northwestern border from Redwall to Merywyn, intended to alert the capital and their Cygnaran allies of any forces moving through the region. Within the first few hours of the conflict, Widowmaker snipers silenced all seven outposts.

Even more notable during the Llael invasion were the exploits of Kapitan Natalya Naryski. Already one of the most famous Widowmakers, her four-man team pinned down the entire garrison of twenty at Elsinberg Tower for two days. Arriving ahead of schedule, her squad's rifle fire kept word from reaching Merywyn and bought enough time for main force to arrive.

The Widowmakers continue to be an integral part of Khadoran military tactics, and operations rarely take place without their support. They played a key role not only in the occupation of Llael, but subsequent Thornwood battles. Recently, they have seen action in the forest borders as deep as Corvis and Pt. Borne. The High Kommand takes pride in the Widowmakers as an impressive and effective tool for terror, assassination, and battlefield control.

Widowmaker Rifle (d20)

Weapon	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range Inc.	Weight	Type
Custom Vislovski Hunting Rifle	2d6+2	19-20/x3	190 ft.	11 lbs.	Piercing

This weapon bears superficial resemblance to commercially sold Vislovski Rifles. It has a longer but thinner barrel and the stock and other mechanisms designed to reduce weight while enhancing range. Reloading takes 1 standard action and requires a successful Craft (small arms) check (DC 11). Each of these weapons is a masterwork and has been customized for accuracy and equipped with a scope to provide x2 magnification, reducing range increment penalties from -2 to -1. (See IKCG, pp. 188-189.) Vislovski has an exclusive contract with the Widowmakers for these rifles; they are not sold but the base value is 1300 gp. Widowmakers are often outfitted with precision ammunition. (IKCG, pg. 191.)

MULE

Necessity is the mother of invention—in Cygnar that has never been truer than during the feverish creation of the Mule heavy warjack. Border conflicts had been slowly escalating between Khador and Cygnar for some time when Ivan Vladykin the Frenzied, a supposed necromancer, seized the Khadoran throne by force in 457 AR. Nervous about the ramifications of this bloody rise to power, King Hector Sunbright IV and his generals challenged arcane mechaniks across Cygnar to create a warjack fielding a high explosive cannon powerful enough to obliterate anything Khador could bring to the field.

Over the next two years the brilliant innovators at Engines East, who had proven their skill with the Nomad in 455 AR, again produced spectacular results in record time. The design of the Mule has withstood the test of time. The creation of the Mule was a clear indicator of the bright future ahead for the geniuses at Engines East, having delivered a unique steam-driven cannon firing a round of unprecedented explosive power, demolishing entire enemy formations with a single blast, causing chaos and disruption in enemy ranks. During this golden era, these mechaniks would go on to design and manufacture many highly effective warjacks including the Cygnaran Ironclad and the Talon, a light 'jack still used by many Mercenaries today.

While cannons were mounted on earlier warjacks and the colossals, the two-part blasting powder had always presented obstacles to repeating fire. Engineers were struggling to create an automated system to feed both blasting charges and ammunition into a chamber without requiring outside assistance. Earlier cannons required a crew to reload them between shots, adding complications to their ongoing use on the battlefield. Engine's East avoided this problem entirely by an innovative solution whereby steam pressure would be used instead of blasting powder to hurl projectiles. With a design in less than a month and a prototype up and running within three, the Mule found and then raced down the road not taken.

The minds at Engines East collaborating on the Mule had one primary motto: Keep it simple. Starting with the Nomad chassis, the key to the Mule's success was the Steam Lobber Cannon. This weapon relies on pressure built up in the Mule's boiler to send its shell across the field in an arc. There were some initial difficulties creating enough pressure to produce sufficient range without rupturing the boiler. The designers of the Mule worked during the early prototypes to do everything possible to

CHASSIS: Mule

IN SERVICE: 459 AR (Decommissioned by Cygnar in 582 AR)

HEIGHT: 12.1'

WEIGHT: 9 tons

MAXIMUM LAND SPEED: 18 Km/h

ARMOR THICKNESS RATING: 2" riveted plate

CARRYING CAPACITY: 975 Kg

MAXIMUM LOAD: 1450 Kg

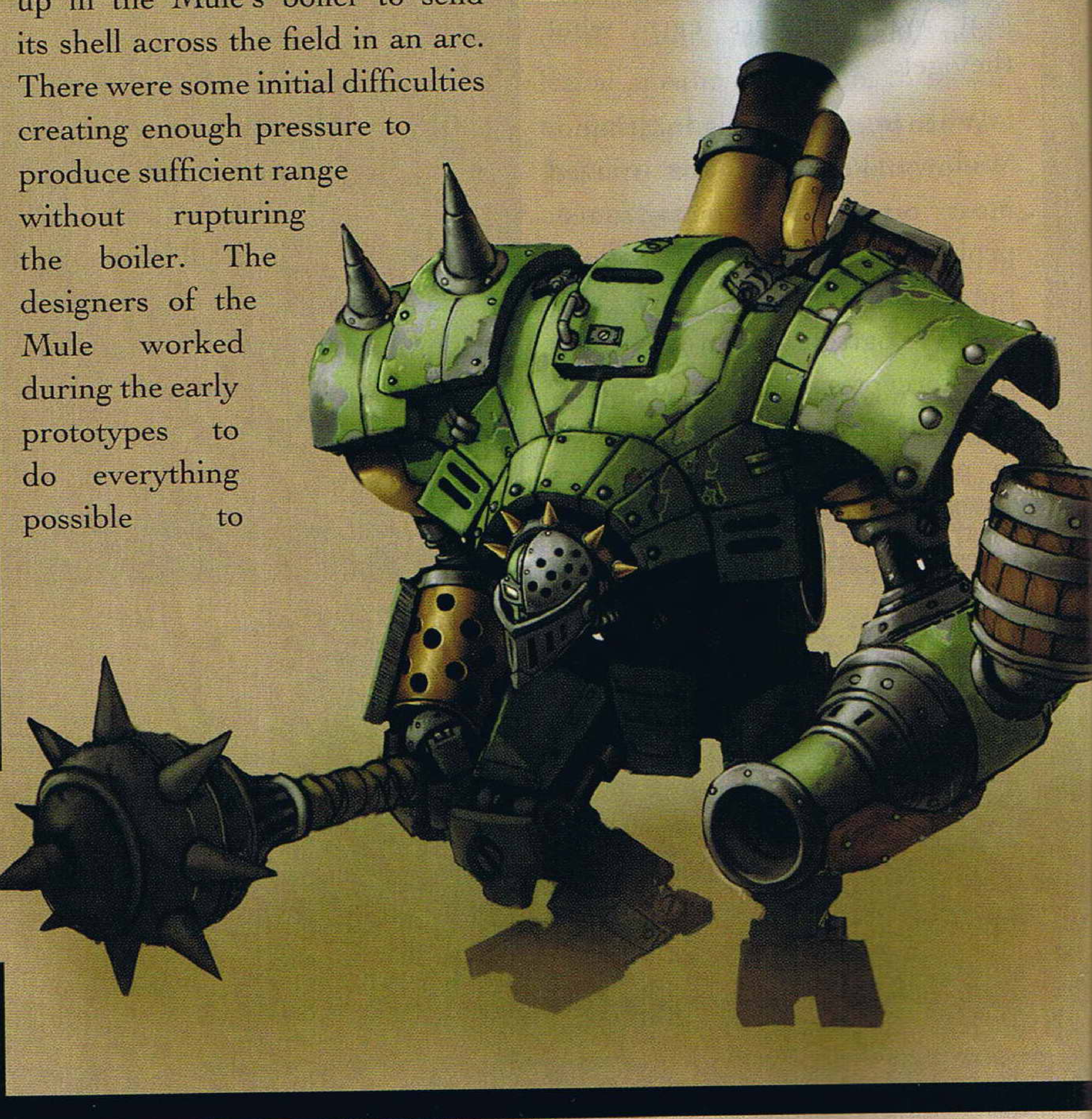
OPTIMAL BOILER FILL: 40 gallons

FUEL LOAD: 120 Kgs

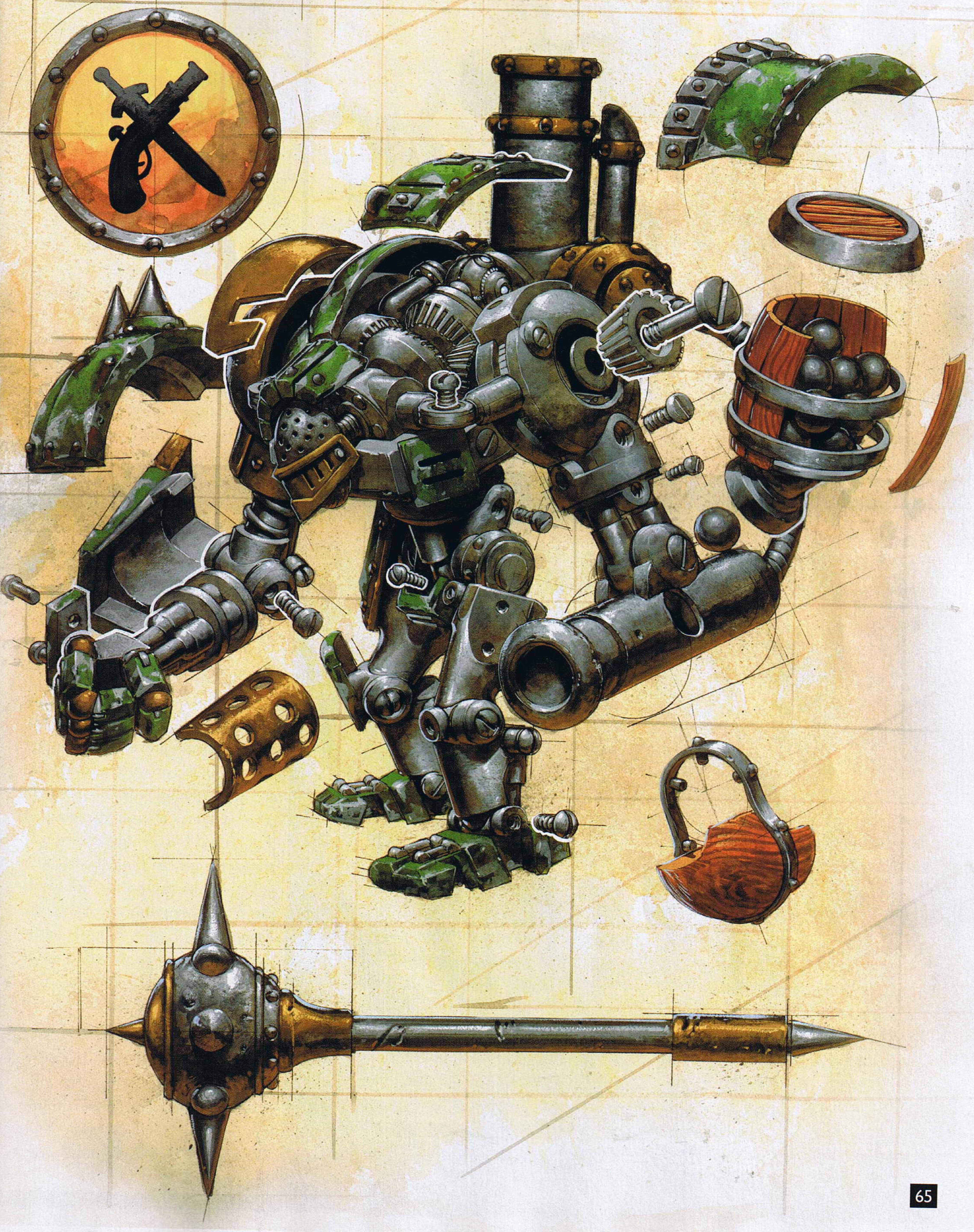
FUEL CONSUMPTION: 6 hrs general, 1 hr combat

DESIGNER NOTATIONS: "I'd pit the Mule against anything the 'geniuses' in Korsk or Caspia have ratcheted together. With enough steam pressure you can move a mountain."
—Bordon Redhammer, Engines East

BATTLEFIELD RECOMMENDATIONS: "Sometimes the blast will hit just perfect, knocking everyone in the vicinity out of their boots and across the battlefield!"
—Sam MacHorne

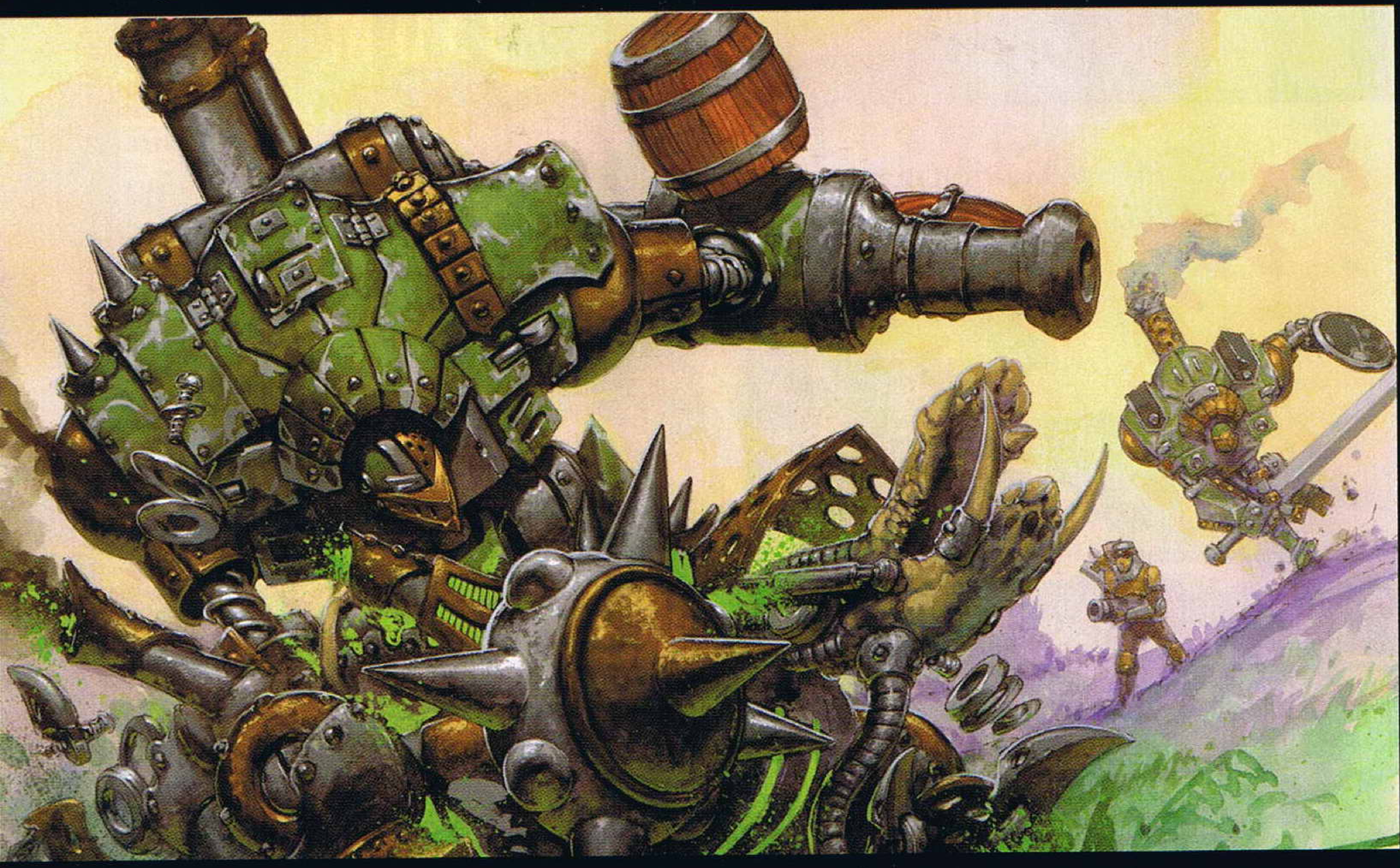


MULE



Mule Heavy Warjack*

Large Construct (mechanikal, steamjack)



Armament: Battle Mace, Steam Lobber Cannon

Hit Dice: 18d10+30 (129 hp)

Base Initiative: -1

Speed: 25 ft. (5 squares)

Armor Class: 24 (-1 size, -1 dex, +16 armor), touch 8, flat footed 24

BAB/Grapple: +13/+27

Attack: Battle Mace +23 (2d8+10) or Steam Lobber Cannon +12 (4d10, see below)

Full Attack: Battle Mace +23/+18/+13 or Steam Lobber Cannon +12 (4d10, see below)

Space/Reach: 10 ft. by 10 ft. (10 foot reach.)

Saving Throws: Fort +6, Reflex +5, Will +6

Abilities: Strength 30, Dexterity 9

Cortex: Aurum Grade—Intelligence 8, Wisdom 11

Special Attacks: Steam Pressure, Steam Lobber Cannon

Special Qualities: Mechanikal construct traits, steamjack traits, damage reduction 10/Serricsteel, darkvision 60 feet, low light vision

CR: 13

Steam Lobber Cannon (Ex): The range increment on the steam lobber cannon is 40 feet. The cannon can be fired at maximum once per round. The cannon shot explodes on impact, causing 4d10 damage in a 20 foot radius. This weapon is treated as a deviating weapon (see NQM#2). The Steam Lobber Cannon hopper can hold up to a maximum of 12 shots.

Steam Pressure (Ex): As a full-round action the Mule can make a high pressure shot, increasing the range increment of the Steam Lobber Cannon to 60 feet.

* As a mercenary warjack, individual Mules are often customized and modified by their owners, and are found in varied states of repair and with different optional enhancements. Attributes listed here indicate a typical fully operational and well maintained Mule, less than seventy years old.

increase range. The tradeoff of this design was well worth the effort: sidestepping blasting powder as a propellant, this powder could be packed into the shell itself, creating a singularly impressive explosive blast.

The process of improving the cannon's range was not without pitfalls. On a clear morning outside Corvis, the designers gathered in a small group to witness the adjusted Lobber in action. The tinkering with the steam piping succeeded better than the engineers had expected. By an accident of the release mechanism, the cannon did not fire when activated, but built up additional pressure and finally launched its projectile well past the intended target. The engineers were horrified when the shot hit a small supply building near their firing field, detonating and killing everyone inside, including an engineer's son. While tragic, this accident had proven the new design could withstand added pressures and deliver sufficient range to make the weapon viable. All that was required was determining how to do this reliably.

The mechaniks achieved this by adding a cut-off valve that directed steam power from the legs to the lobber, providing a reliable and sufficient increase in pressure. After testing it was determined that if the Mule held its position, it could increase its range nearly half again. While the Steam Lobber is the Mule's signature weapon, the designers added a simple battle mace to provide an effective melee weapon to crush enemies that would inevitably close.

Having refined their ingenious design, the engineers took their prototype to Caspia for a demonstration of its capabilities to the Cygnaran Armory, the Warmaster General, and King

Hector Sunbright. When they saw the Mule scatter several test targets across the firing range, the military leaders were impressed and the Royal Treasurer was immediately ordered to pay a small fortune to Engines East for the design specifications. While most subsequent Mules were built by the Cygnaran Armory in Caspia, some few were built directly by Engines East in Corvis, and there are those who believe these have the fewest ongoing maintenance problems.

The Mule was first fielded against Khador the same year that Ivan Vladykin the Frenzied was slain in combat during an internal coup. His successors became increasingly concerned as the Mule began to appear in more and more border skirmishes. Cygnar was able to maintain its ranged superiority until the Khadoran development of the first Destroyer in 480 AR.

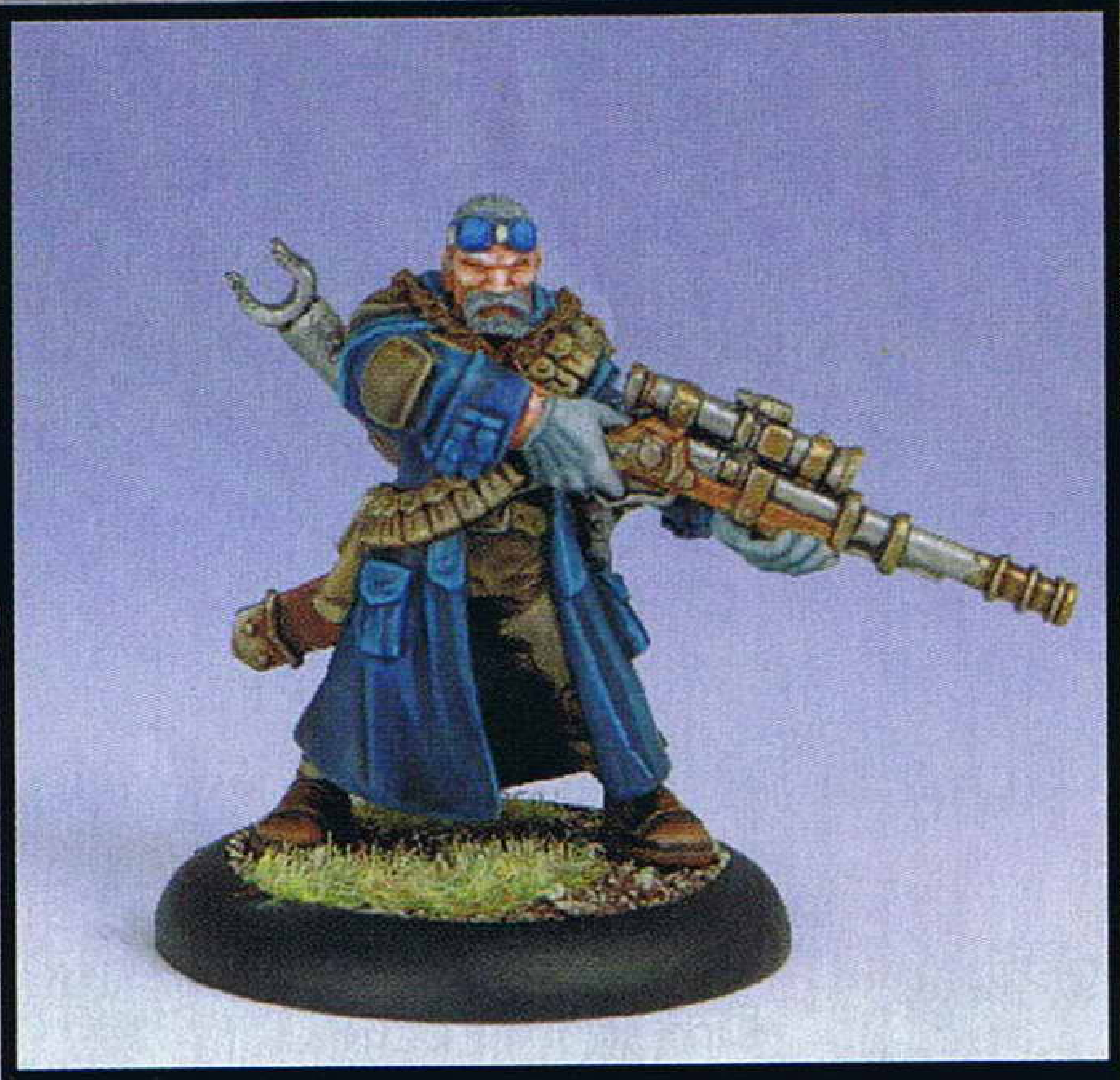
The man who took the throne after Vladykin was in every way his opposite. King Mikhail Vanar was not a strong man but he was intelligent and listened well to his advisors. He made sweeping military reforms to address the disparity between Khador's technology and that of their rivals. His long-term plans included developments that led to the first of the Khadoran Destroyers. Sadly King Mikhail died of a festering illness (Vladykin's Curse) before seeing his plans come to full fruition. This early Destroyer model went a long way toward leveling the playing field during the continuing border conflicts between Khador and Cygnar. The Thornwood War of 510-511 AR was the first major engagement between Cygnar's Mules and the Khadoran Destroyers, a great clash of machines with explosive rounds which tore through ranks of men on either side. Some tacticians believe Cygnar managed to win this war despite being greatly outnumbered in large part because of the service of so many Mules, while Khador had yet to produce sufficient quantity of Destroyers and relied too heavily on Berserkers.

After the Thornwood War the Mule continued to serve Cygnar across the battlefields of the Iron Kingdoms. During this time, a number of great minds at the Cygnaran Armory were conspiring to set off a series of events that would eventually lead to the decommissioning of the Mule from active Cygnaran military service.

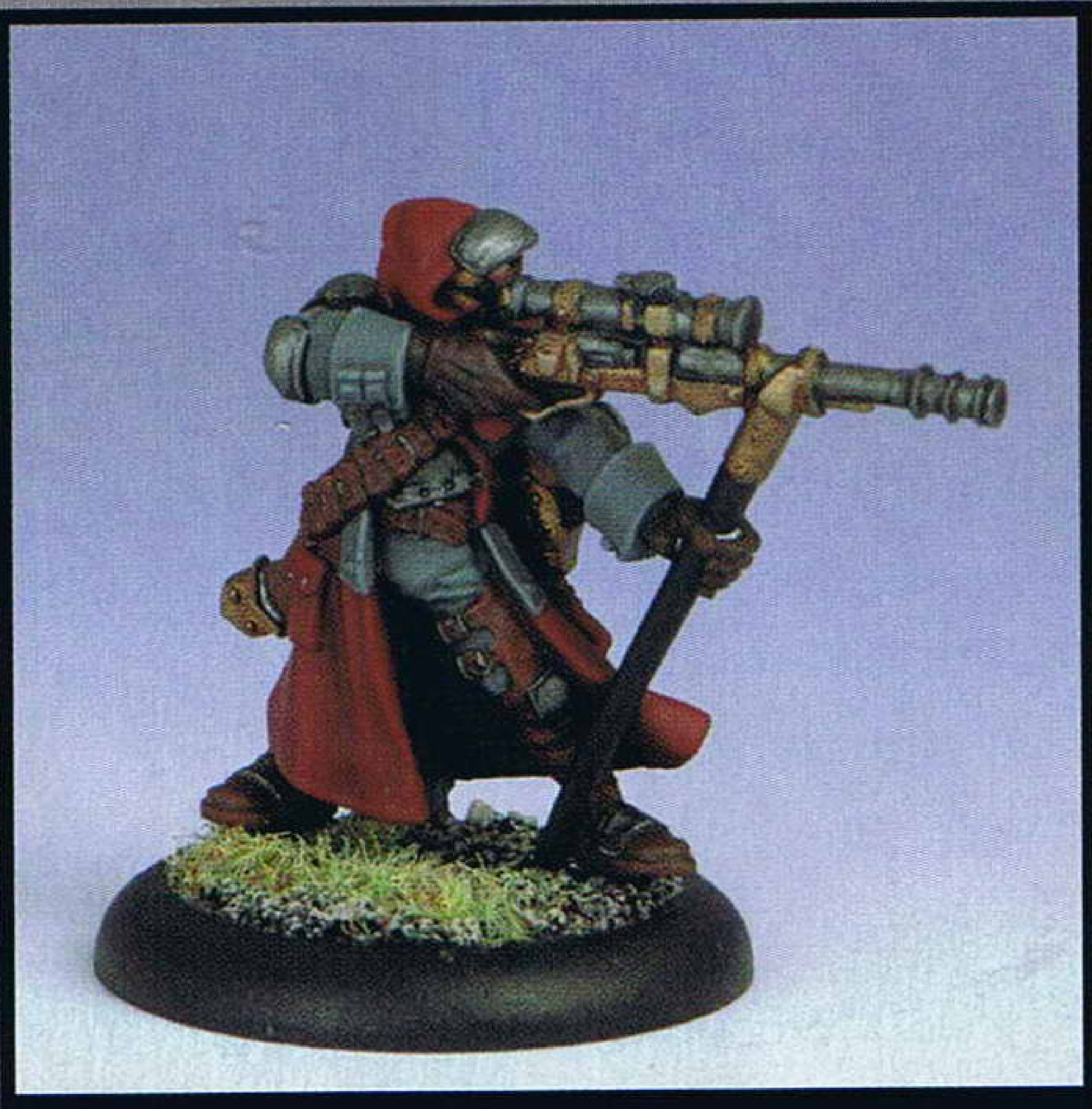
It wasn't until a century later in 564 AR that the Defender was released by the Cygnaran Armory as the next stage in Cygnar's warjack development. Some would argue even after all this time that the Defender is not actually superior to the Mule, but represents instead a shift in philosophy among Cygnar's generals. The Defender represented a stronger emphasis on extending the range and accuracy of Cygnar's fire-support, as well as the push to create a cannon that did not incur as many incidental friendly casualties. Without question, the Mule's great explosive rounds could shred allies as easily as enemies, particularly in the tumult of a smoke-filled battlefield. An important secondary consideration was the length of time required to maintain the aging warjack, which required a loving and constant hand by its mechaniks. While the upkeep of its steam system was never expensive—as parts were cheap and easy to come by—Cygnar's military was willing to pay for more expensive and modern parts which would require fewer man-hours of vigilant care. Those in the service were happy enough to switch to its more modern successor.

The Mule continued in military use for another 18 years before being decommissioned in 582 AR, after individual Mules were steadily replaced at garrisons by the Defender. By the time the last Mule was decommissioned in Corvis, the city of its birth, the warjack had served an unprecedented one hundred and twenty three years. This stands as the longest service record by a warjack chassis in Cygnar's history, only exceeded in the entire Iron Kingdoms by the Khadoran Berserker.

The Mule has lived on as one of the more popular warjacks in mercenary service—deadly in combat, equally effective with either ranged or melee weaponry. Out of combat the Mule is equipped with numerous towing points for cargo. Mercenary companies who need to stay on the move find this aspect of the Mule appealing. It is also still extremely cheap to repair and upkeep, albeit like other older warjacks they require continual maintenance, particularly its steam engine fittings and piping. The fact that it does not require blasting powder to launch its projectiles makes its ongoing cost of operation very appealing. Some would argue that the Mule offers the absolute best value of any heavy warjack available outside the military, and this is a reason many of these old 'jacks are lovingly maintained by proud owners. The Mule's reliability and powerful kick has lived up to its name for nearly a hundred and fifty years and seems likely to carry on into the next few decades of warfare across the Iron Kingdoms.



by **Todd Arrington**



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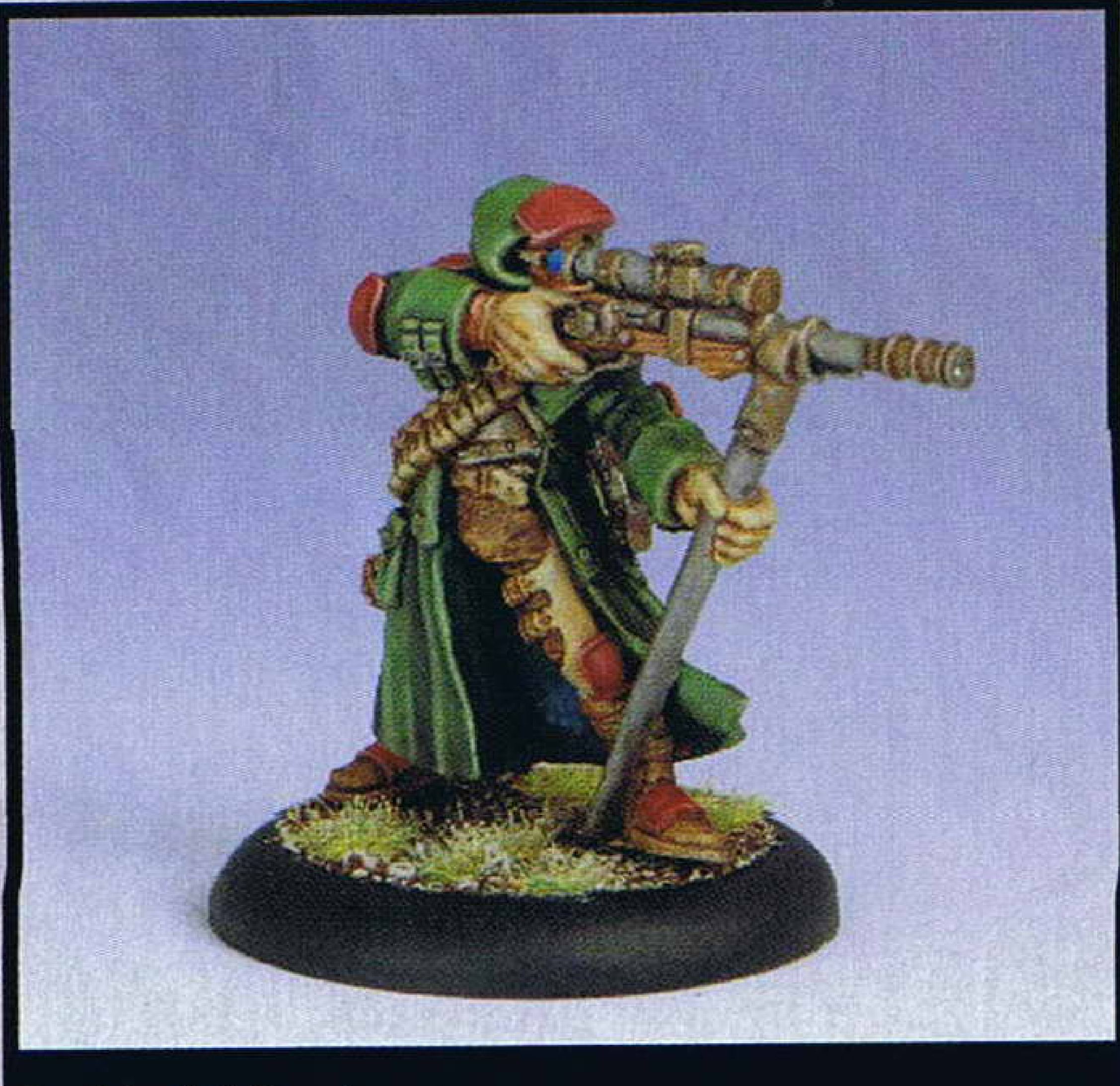

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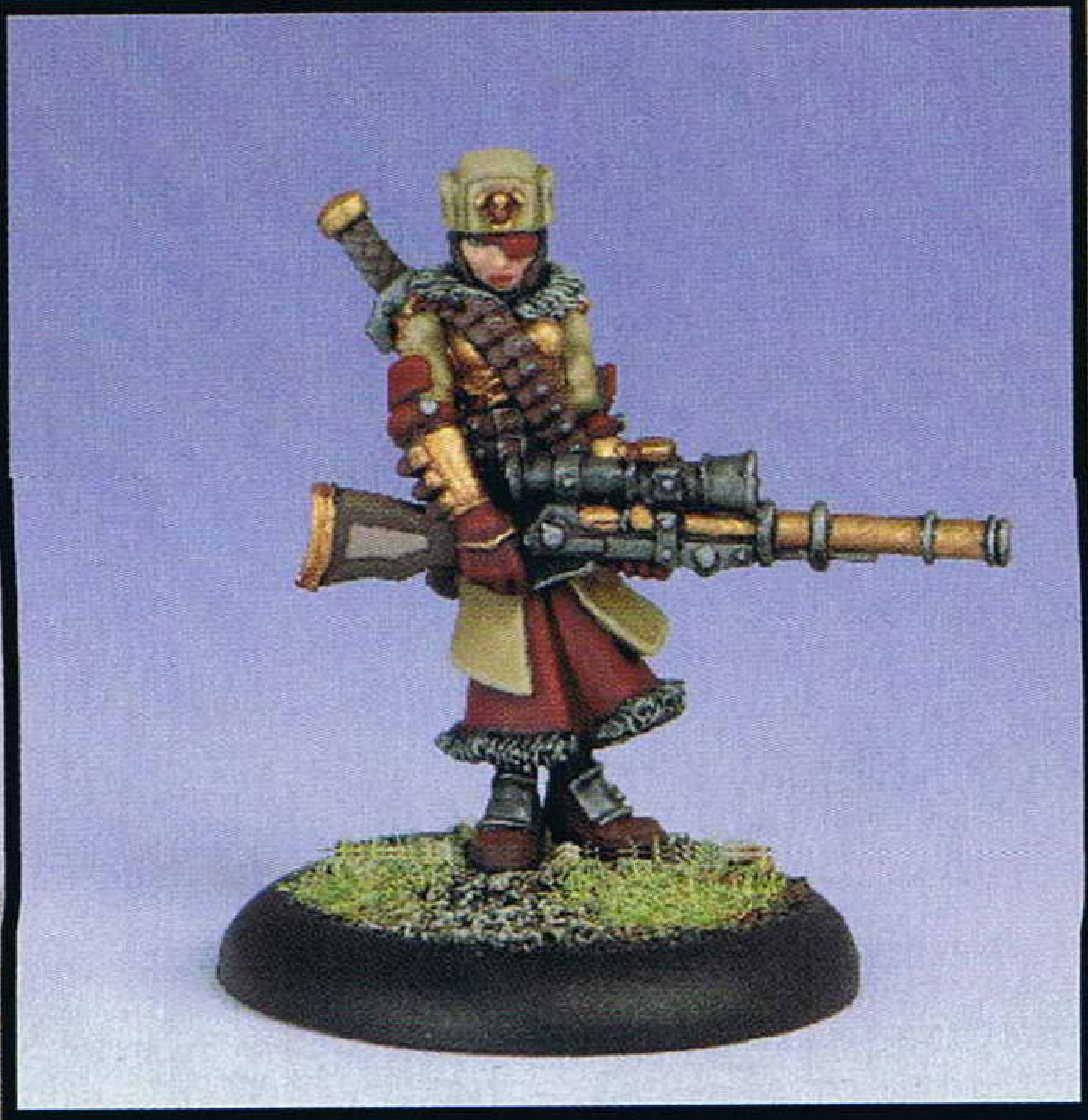

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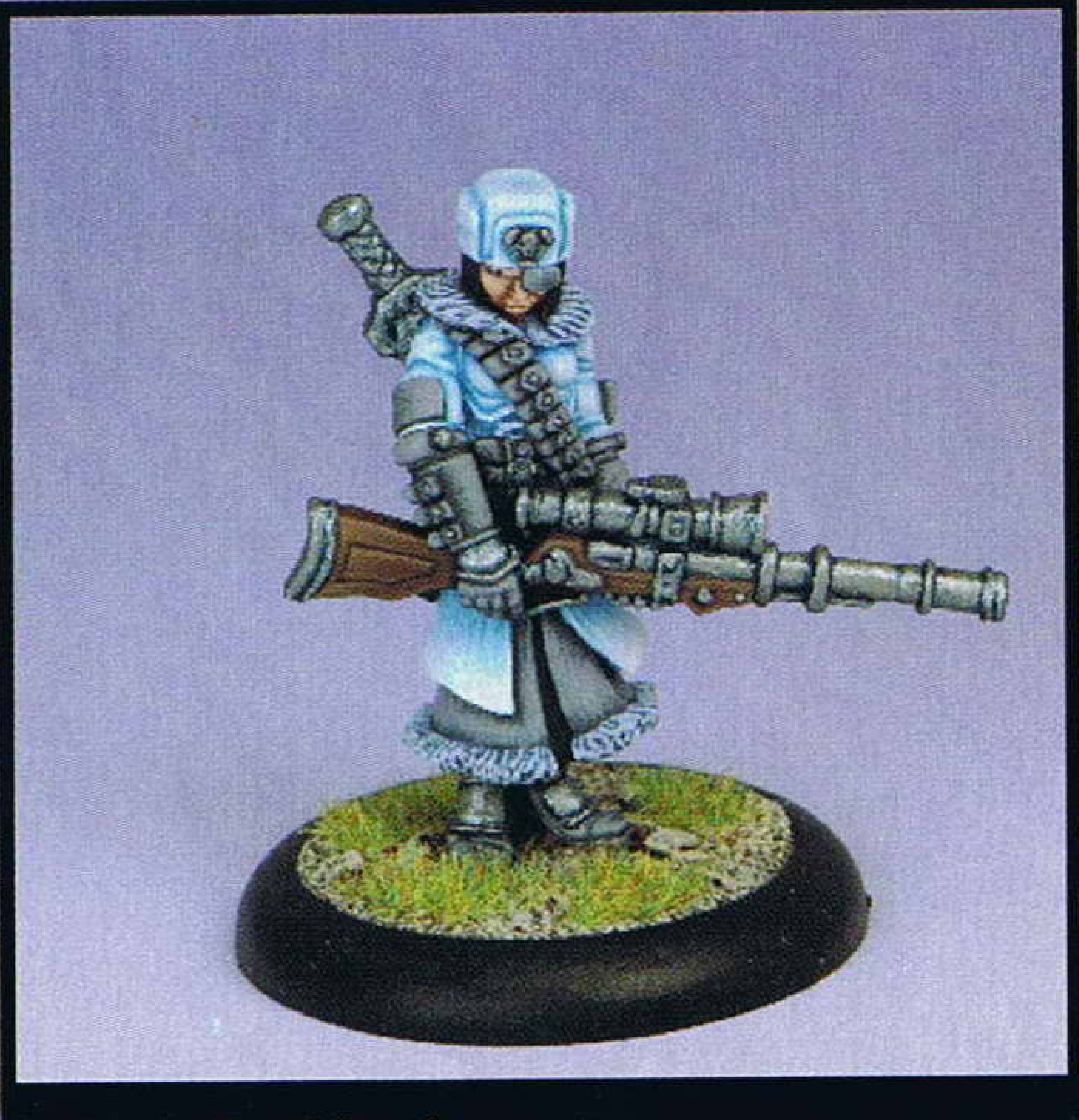

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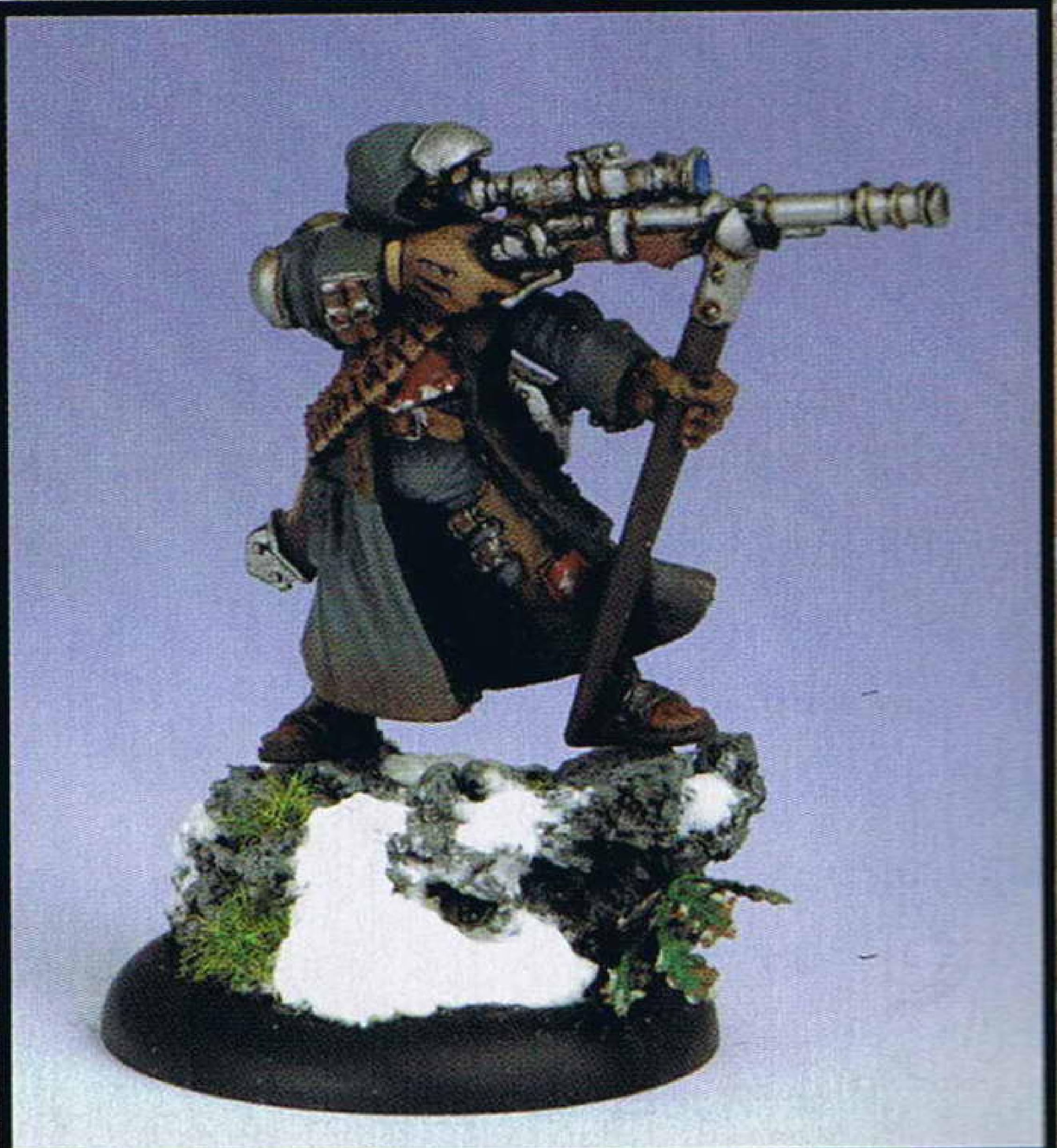

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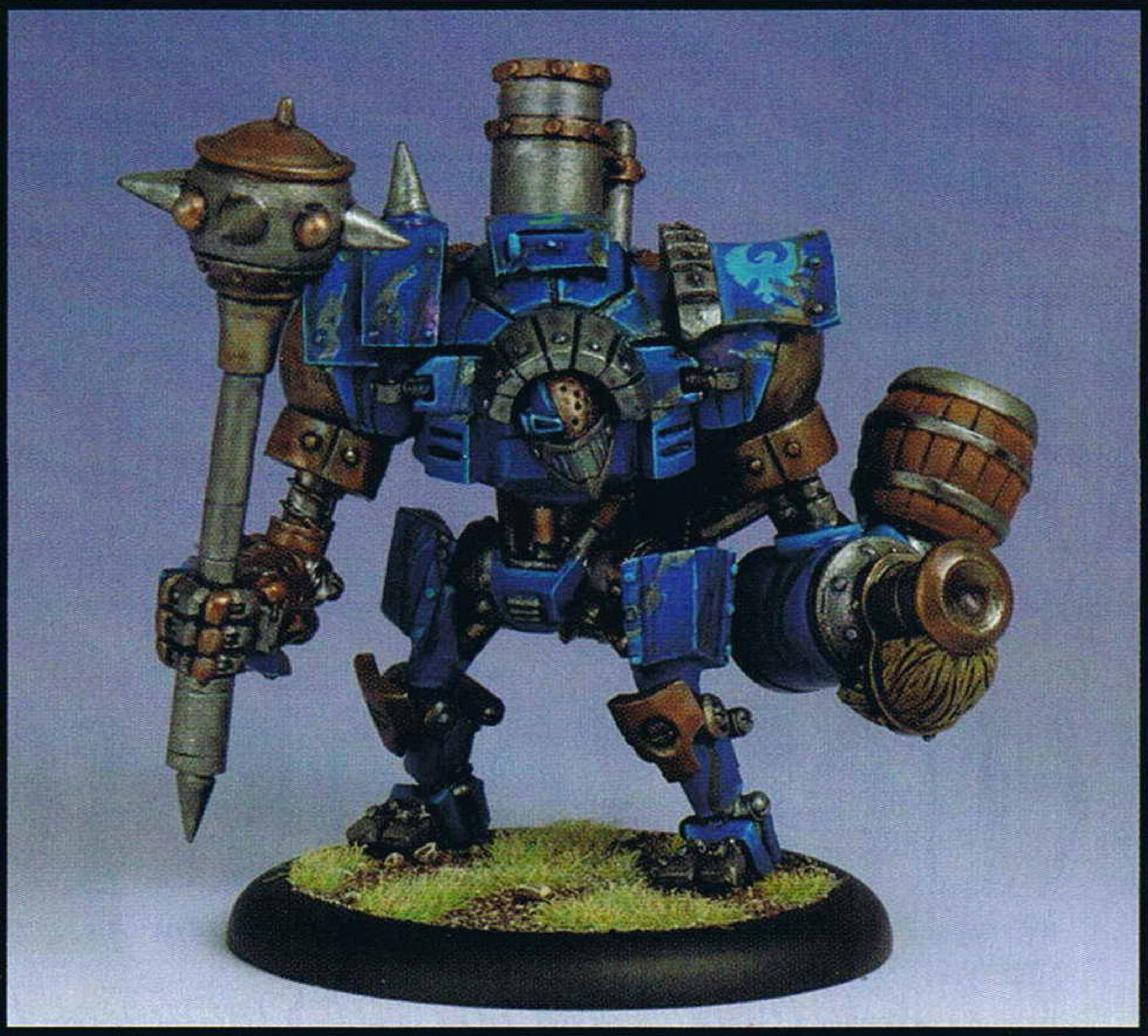

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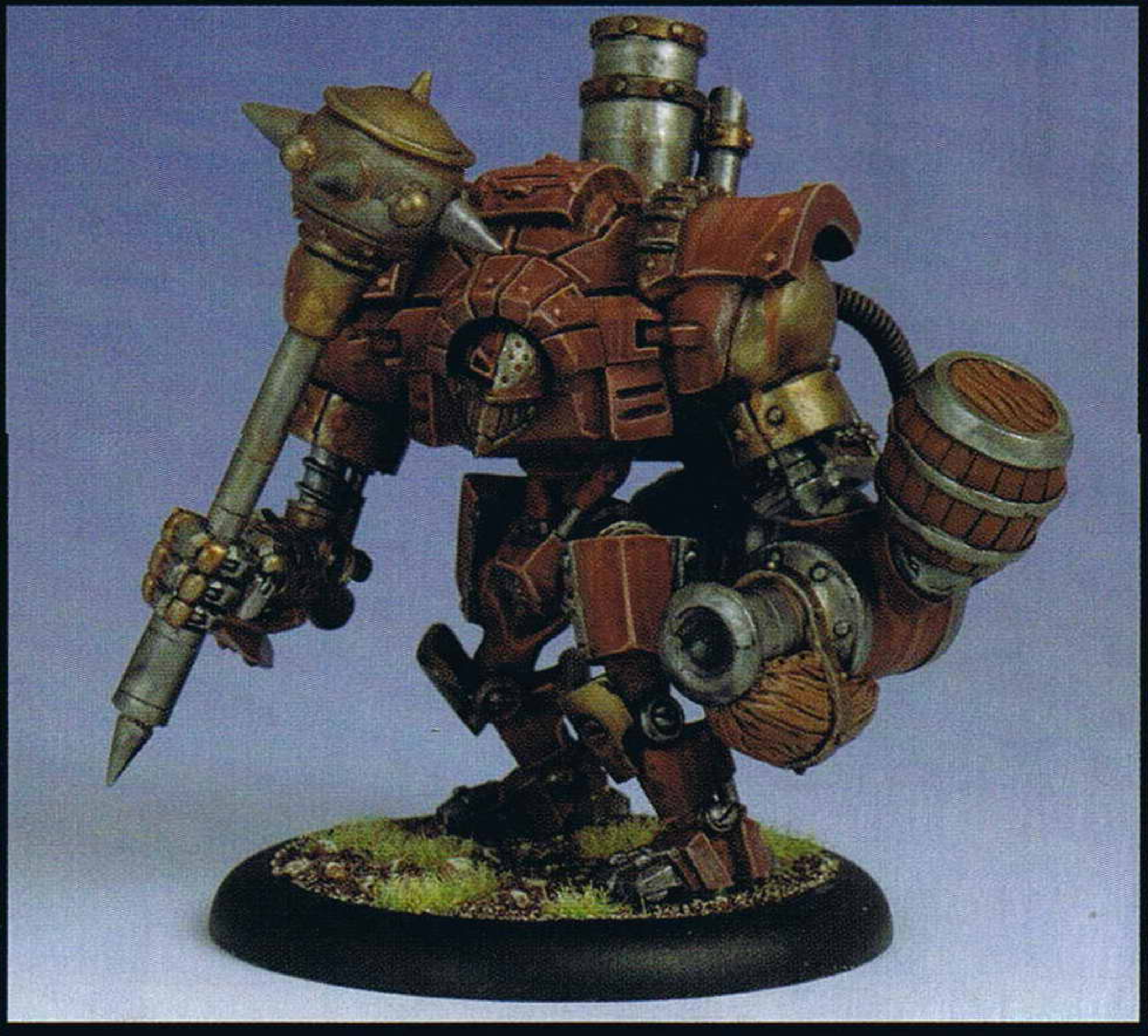

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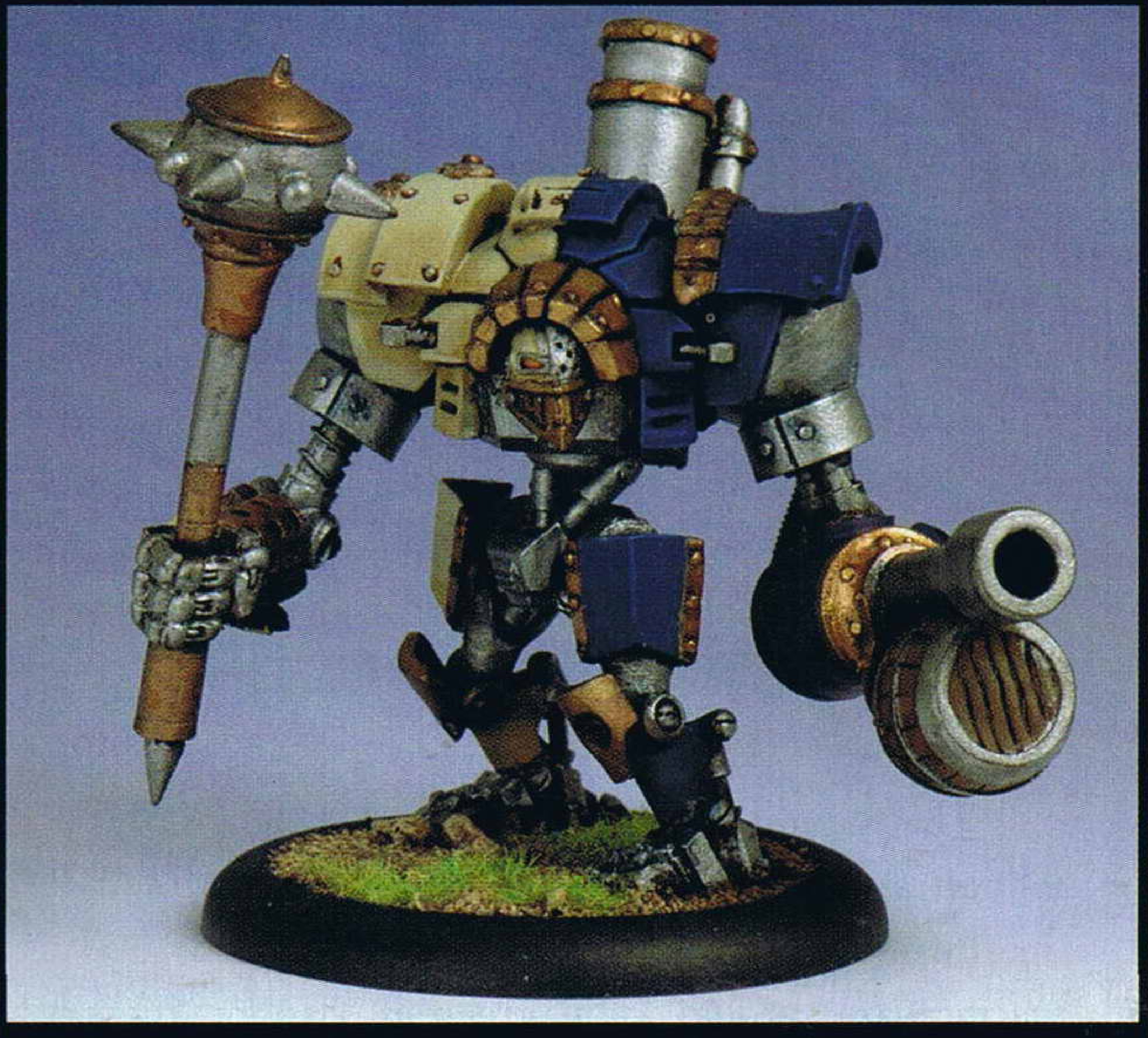


by **Dave Perrotta**

MODELING & PAINTING

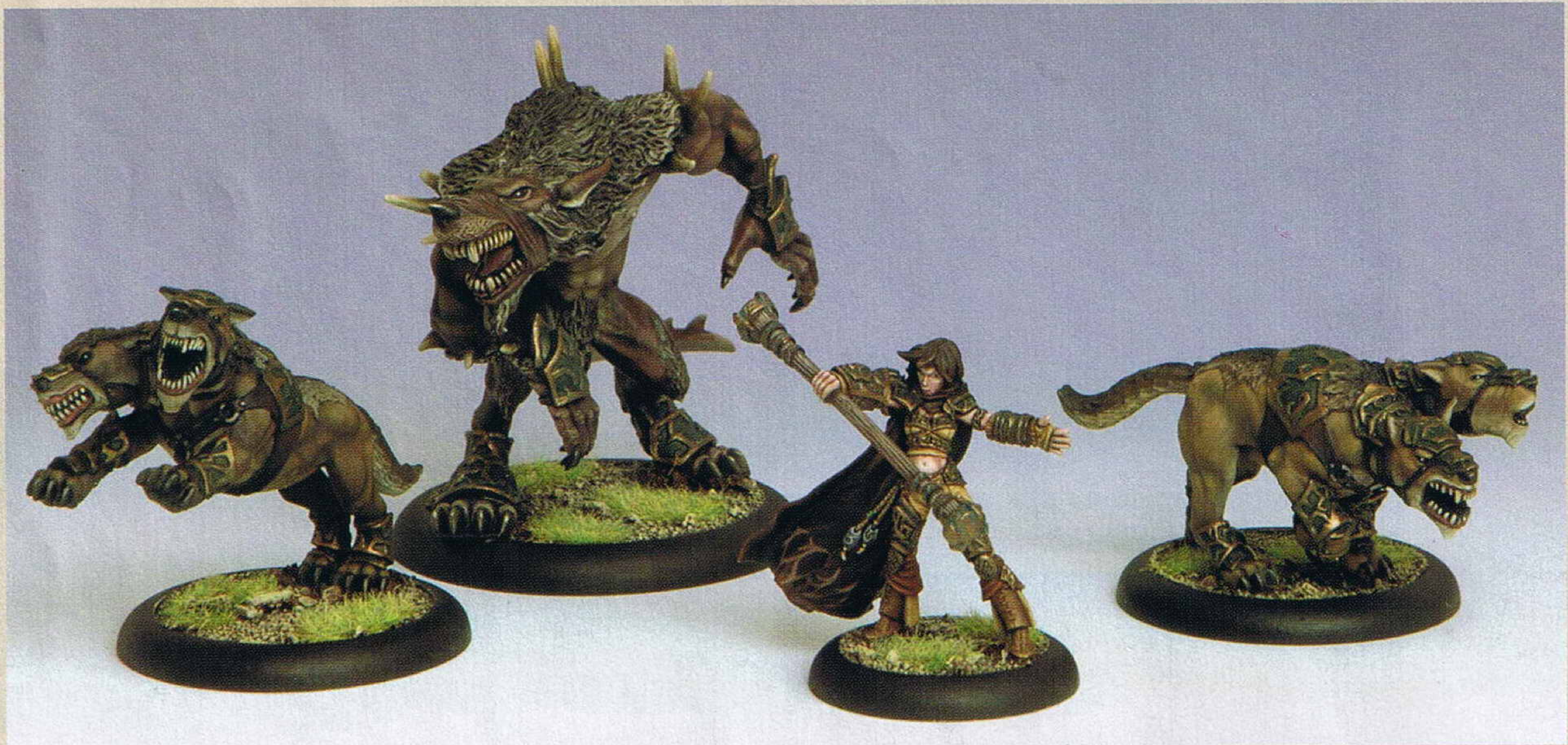
By **Mike McVey**, Miniatures Director, Privateer Press

Miniatures painted by
Ali McVey, Ron Kruzie
& Mike McVey

HORDES FACTION COLOR SCHEMES

We are going to look at the colors and techniques that are applied to each of the four factions to give them their unique character. Each force has a distinct palette of colors that can be used in different ways to unify the miniatures.

With the release of HORDES imminent, this month we are going to look at the color schemes for the four different factions. Each of these factions has a distinct and unique look that ties all of the different troops, creatures and characters together - these color schemes all have common themes that are easy to apply and give all the miniatures in a force a coherent feel.



The miniatures shown in this article are all the "official" PP colors, but of course there is nothing to stop you making up your own unique color schemes for each faction – just look at the character of the modes and try and come up with a color palette that suits the miniatures and goes some way to bringing out the character, location and background of the faction.

FIND MORE MODELING AND PAINTING TIPS AT WWW.BRUSHTHRALLS.COM OR READ ABOUT IT IN HORDES: PRIMAL

CIRCLE

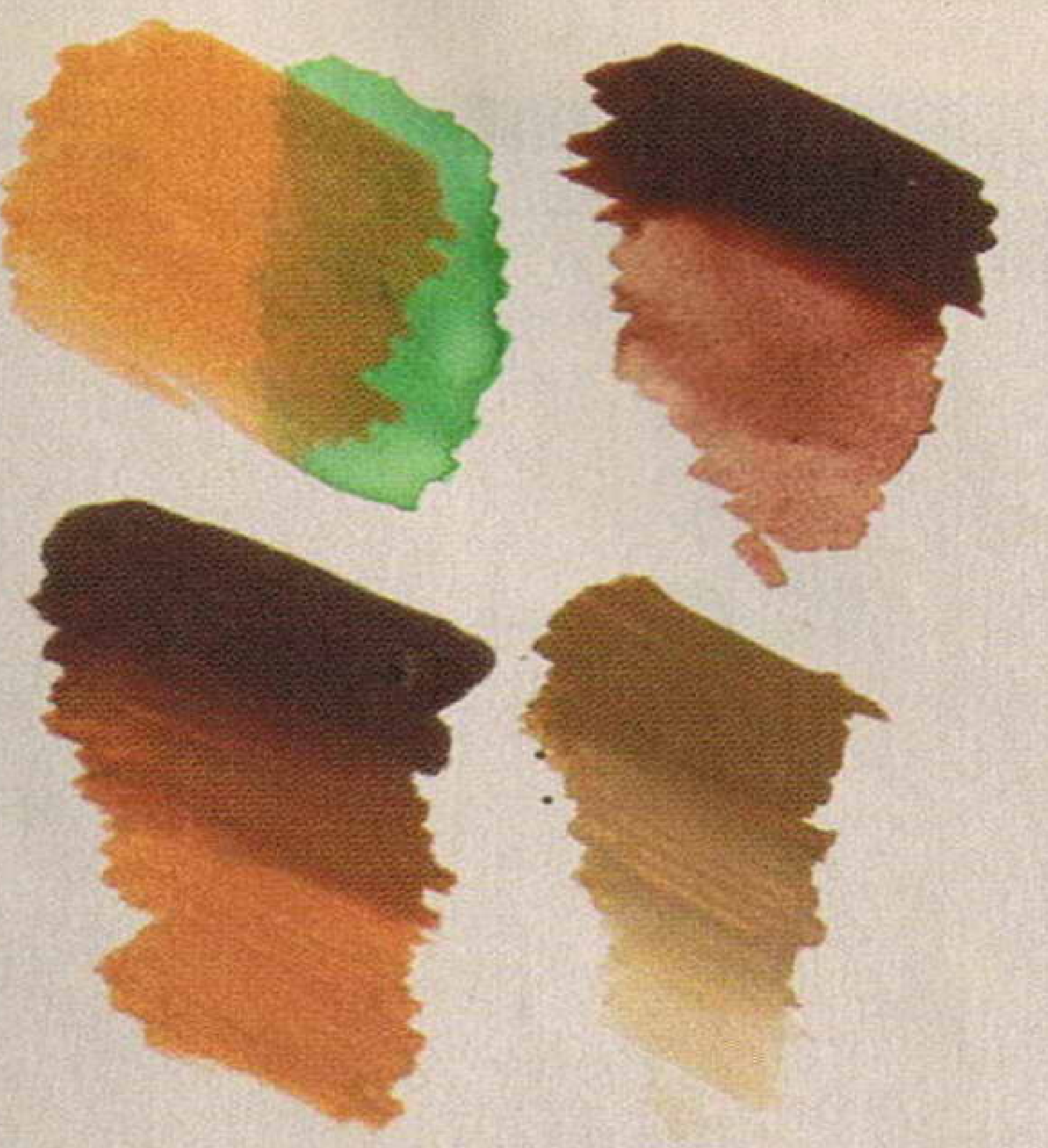
The main colors for the Circle faction are rich and natural tones deep woodland green coupled with warm brown tones. The green is mainly applied as verdigris to metal armor plates, with warm gold and bronze tones to contrast, but it can also be introduced to elements of the clothing. Most of the clothing and robes are painted in different natural brown tones – from deep brown to light tan leather. Some care has to be taken when you are painting miniatures in natural tones – if you're not careful they can end up very muddy and dull looking. The secret is to keep the colors clean and rich – if you add black to brown to deepen it, you will get a flat neutral tone – but adding deep, rich shades of brown to the shadows will provide a far more attractive result.

Green verdigris and gold

The Wolves of Orboros are some of the core troops for the Circle faction; they are heavily armored, but the fur and leather cloaks give a natural element to the painting. The armor is covered in the distinctive patterning found throughout the faction, and is a great example of how the green verdigris and rich gold color scheme works. Even though they are clad head to foot in heavy armor – the overall color scheme is still very natural in feel and doesn't look out of place with the characters who are clad with leather, and the beasts that are covered with fur.

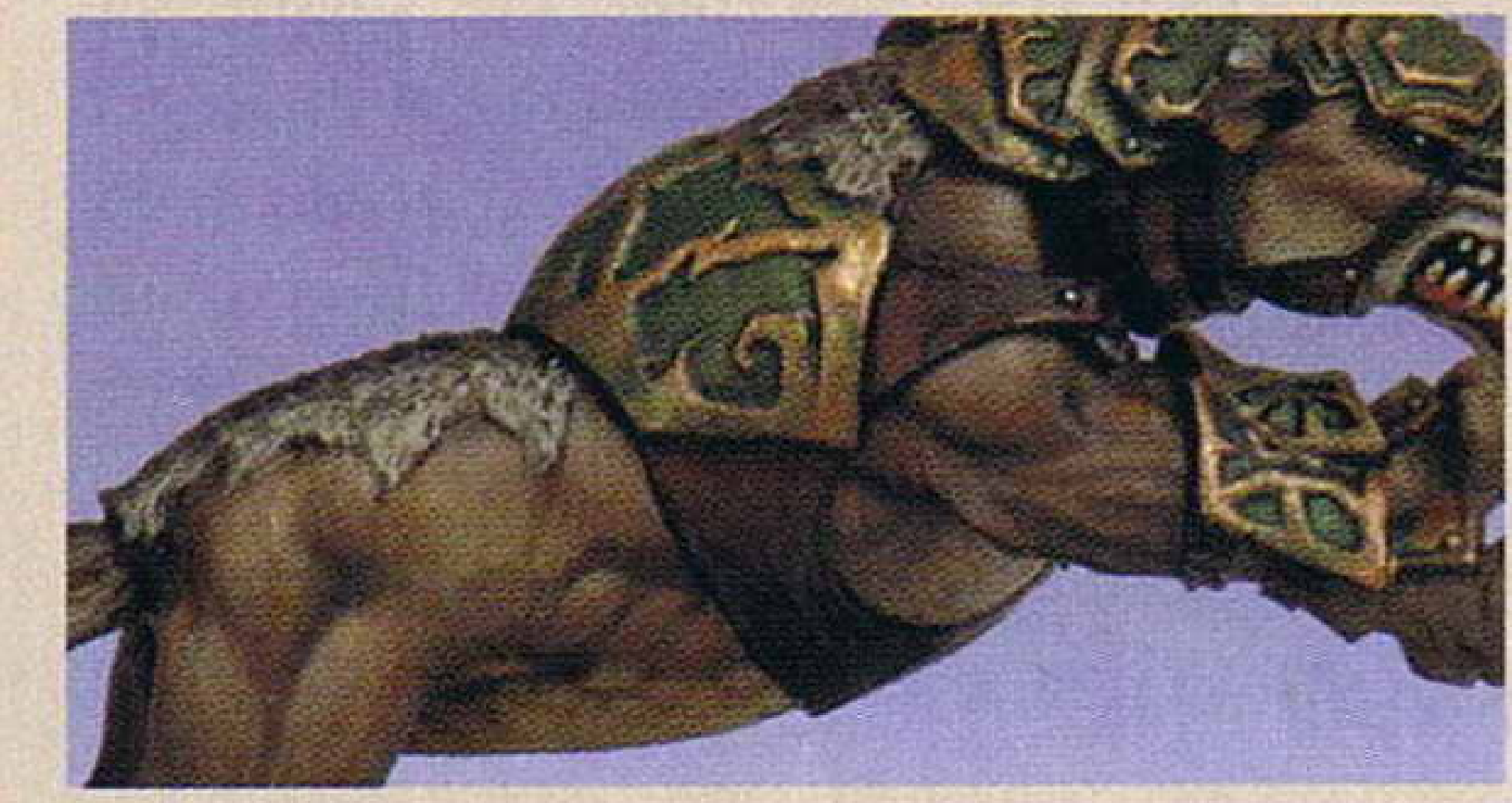
Fur direction

The miniatures for the Argus and Warp Wolf are sculpted with most of the hide areas smooth, with areas of long fur on parts of the body. These smooth areas represent short hair, much like a smooth-coated dog. It's fine to paint them the same as you would any other smooth area, but to add some extra realism and texture to the miniature you can paint on some fur detail. This needs to be done subtly, but can really make the miniature if handled correctly.

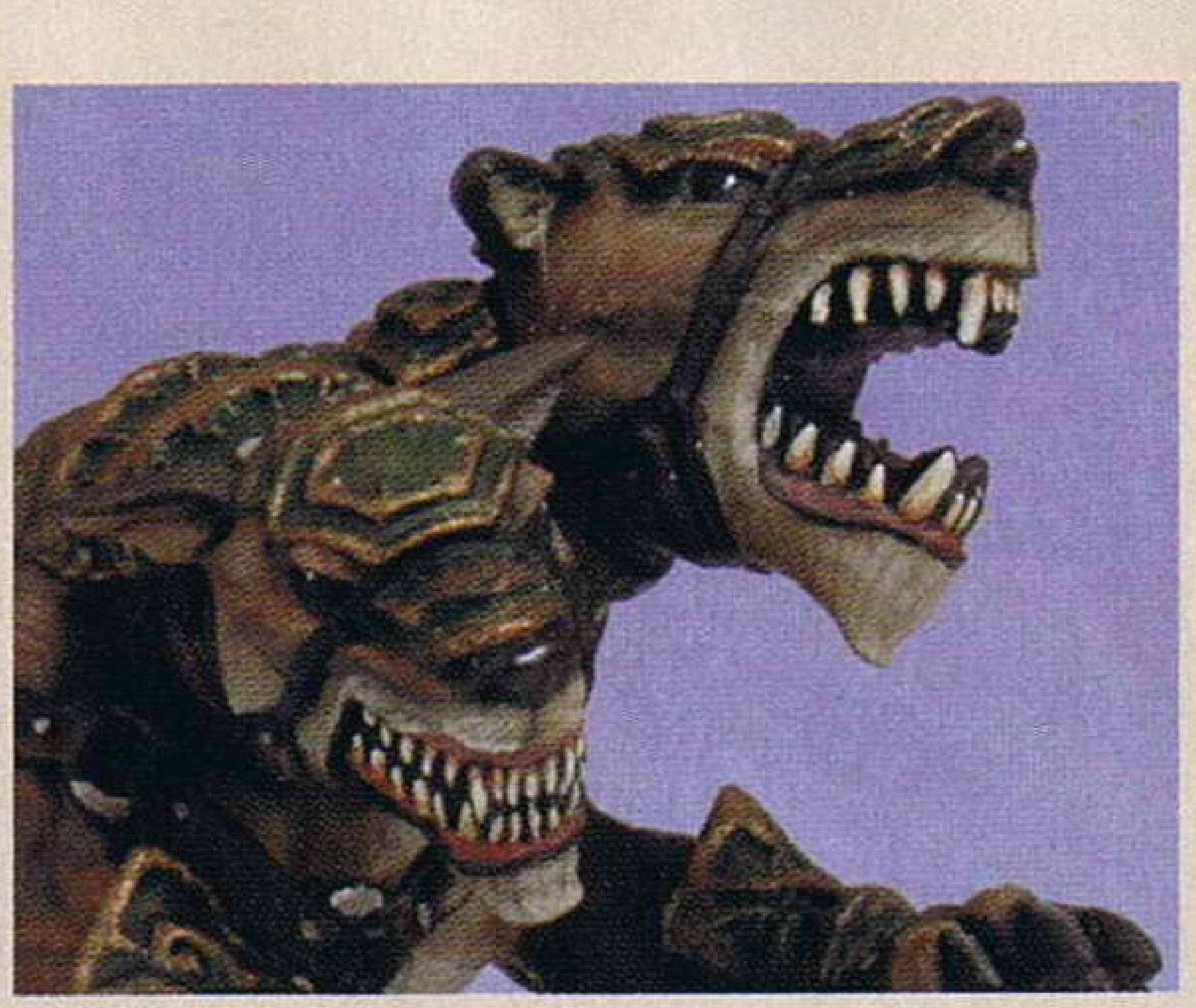


Top — the swatch on the top left shows what happens to bright gold (metallic) is washed over with the verdigris color ink. This example is over white and the effect is applied over black is far deeper and richer. The swatch on the top right shows how you can tell if a brown color is cold or warm by thinning it out. This one contains a lot of red so is warm.
Bottom — Two different sorts of brown, warm on the left and cold on the right. Both of these show how the highlight tones are built up.

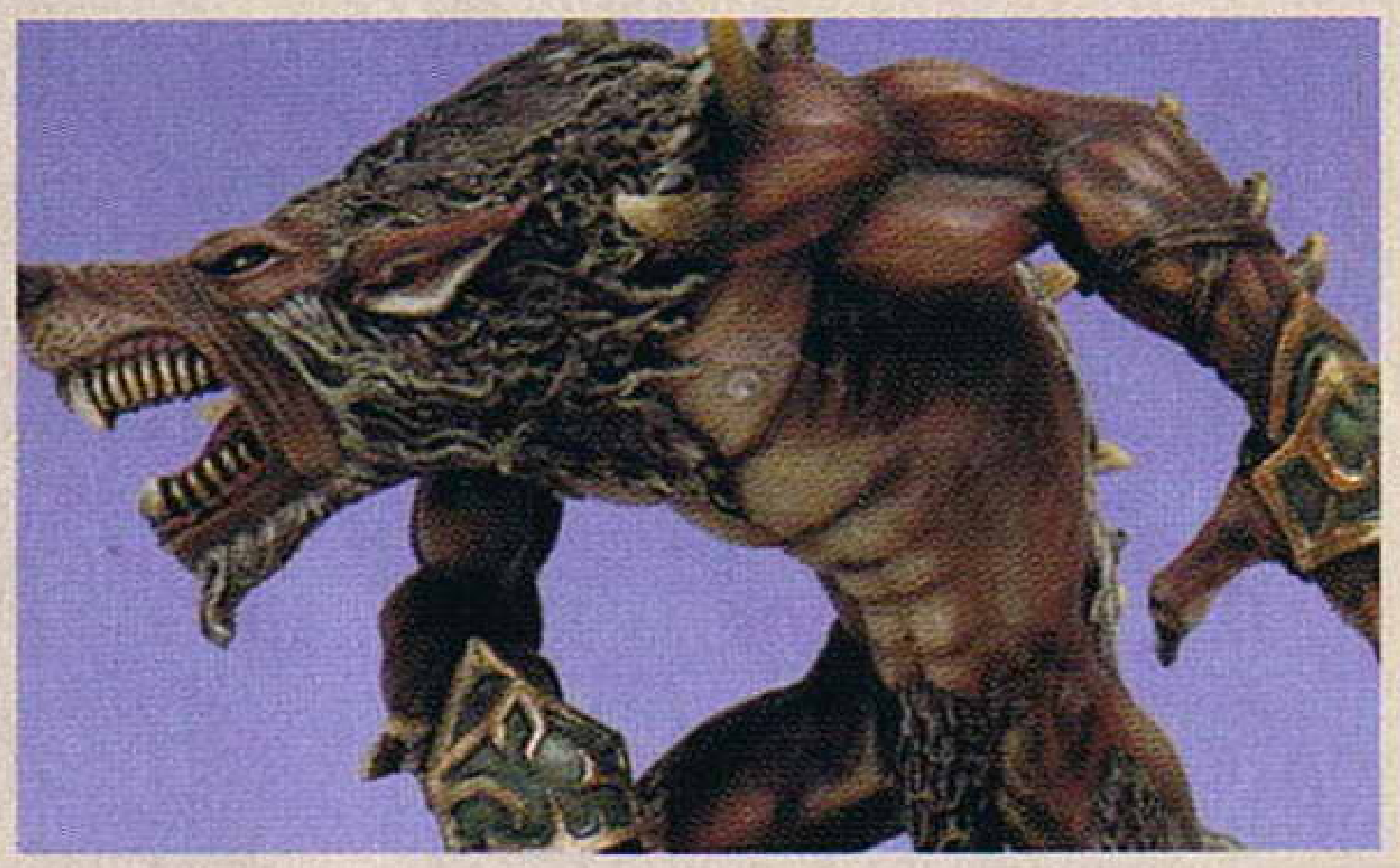
At a basic level, all you need to do is carefully paint on short "hashes" of the highlight tone – but to make it work even better, these should follow the same pattern that they would on a real animal. Do some research, either online or if you have a dog, look at the way the fur grows and use that as a guide.



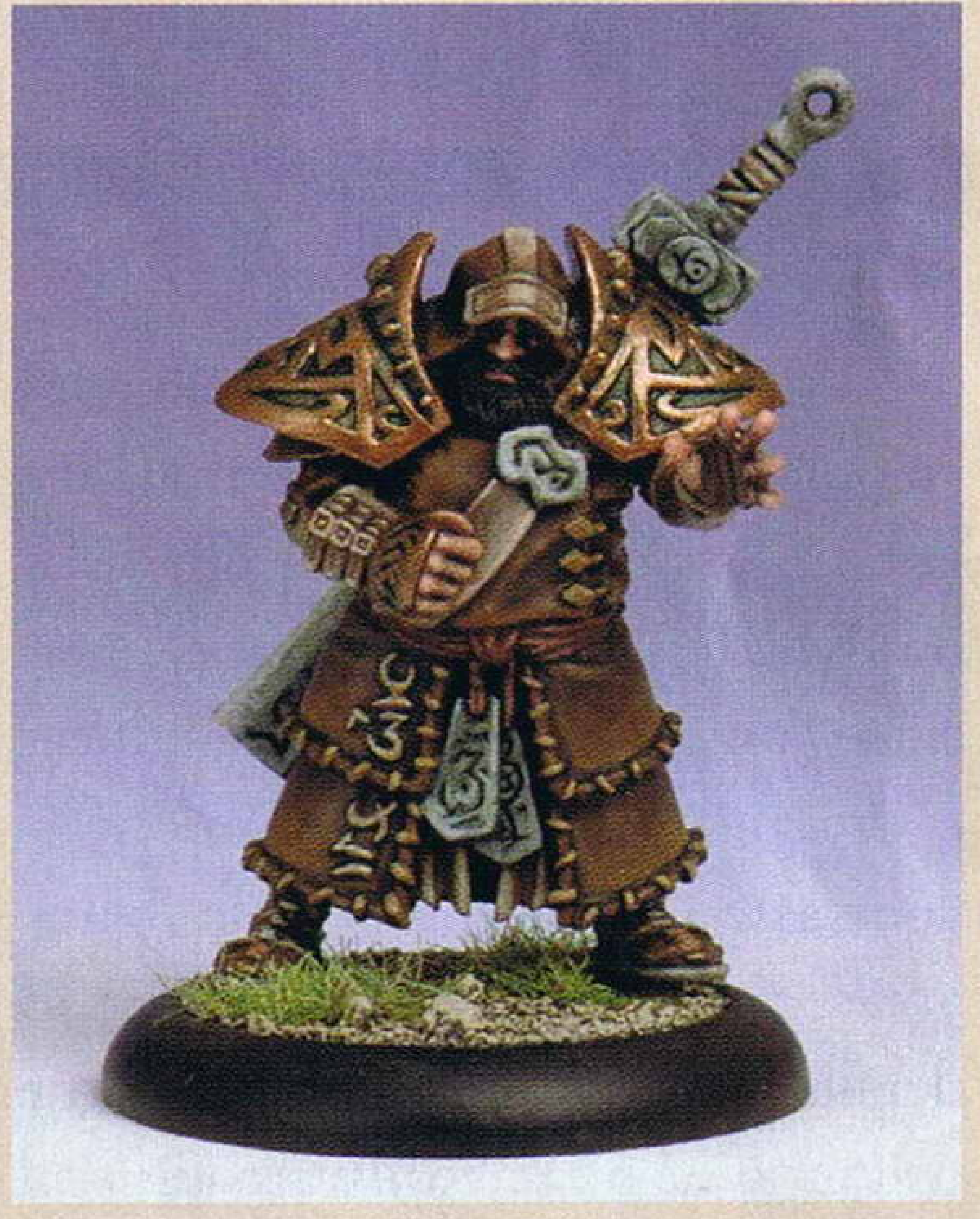
The pelt on the Argus is shaded and highlighted to bring out shape and depth. When this is dry, fur effect is added with a highlight shade - this should be quite subtle and just on the highlighted areas where the light would naturally bring out the fur texture.



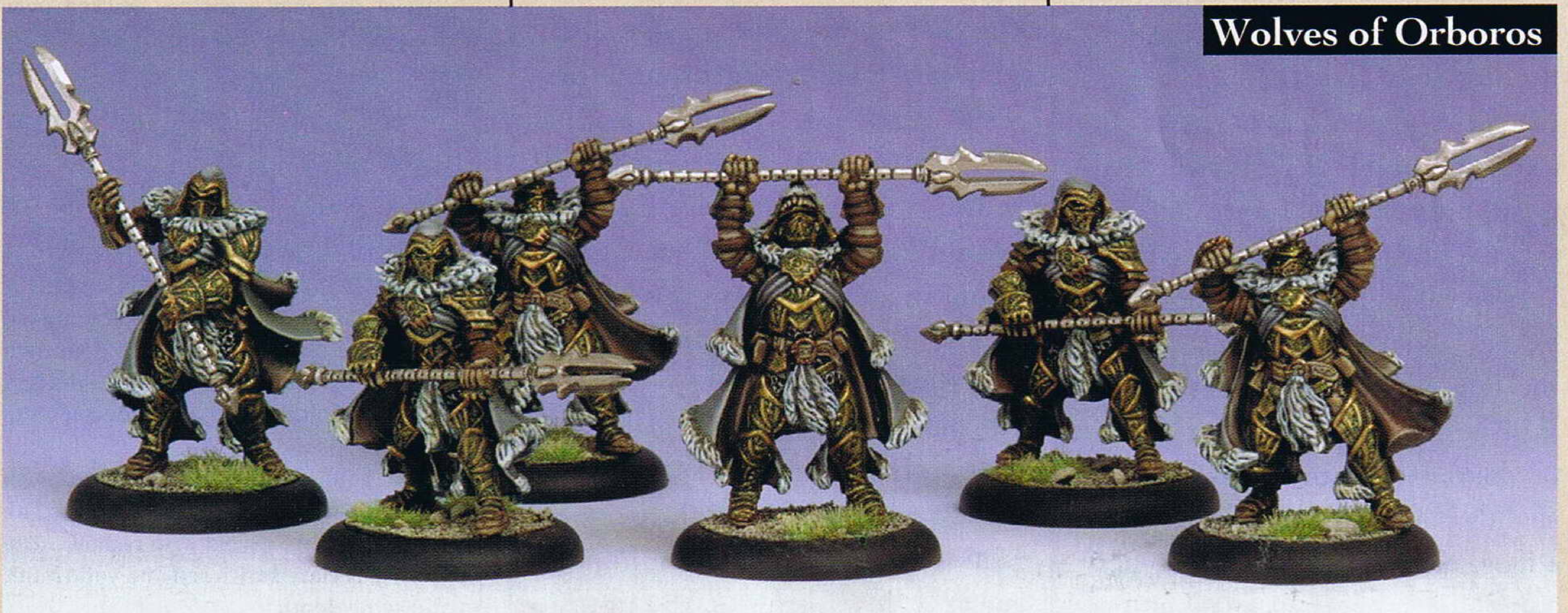
Lighter colors are added around the muzzles and fur texture can be added as well.



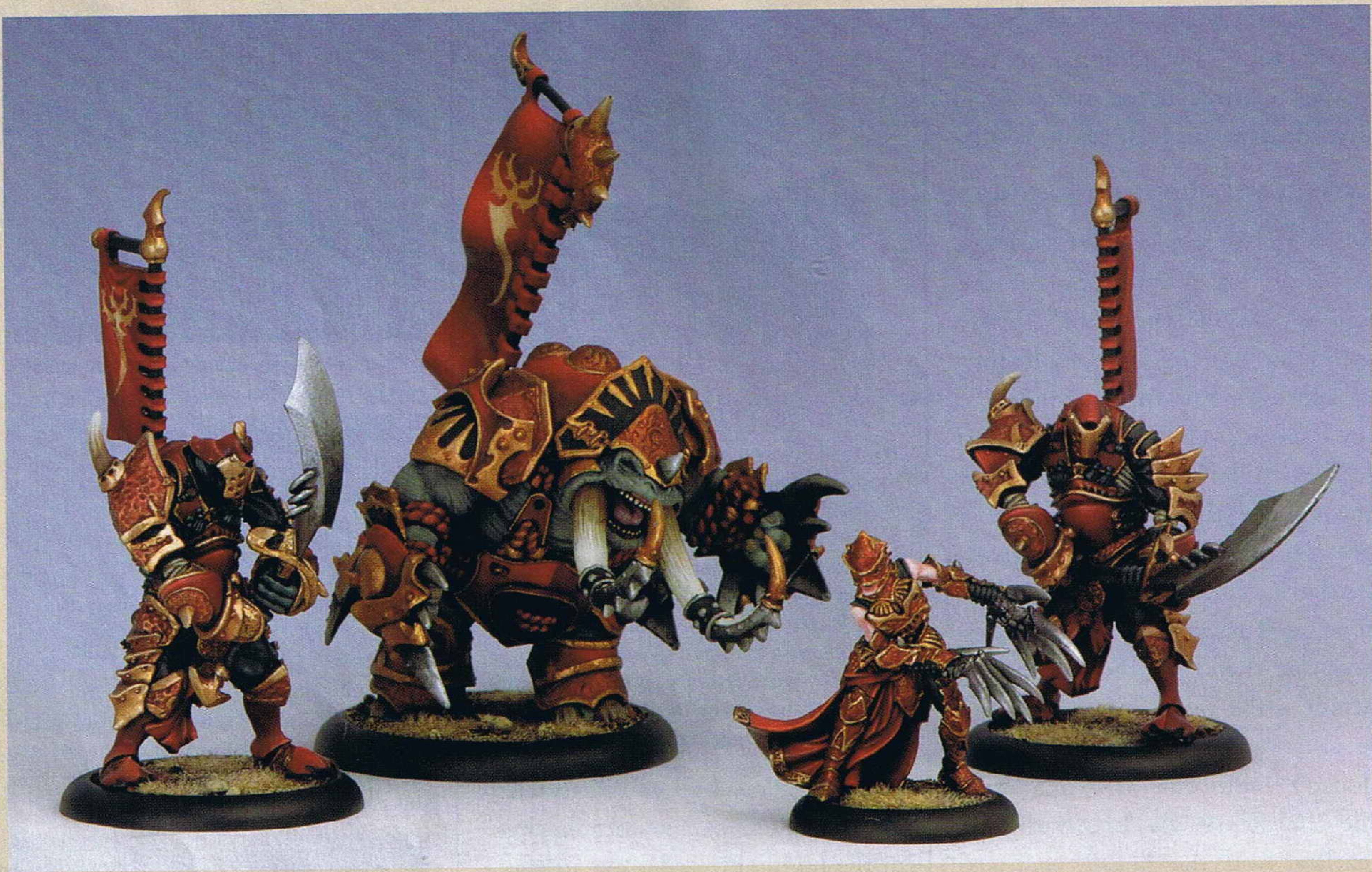
The highlight colors on the Warp Wolf have been applied in the same way as the Argus. The fur texture follows the line of the muscles, even on some of the darker areas this can look good if handled subtly.



Baldur is a great example how a miniature can be painted almost entirely in natural brown tones and still look striking. The shoulder armor really helps to add some contrast but without it really standing out from the rest of the color scheme.

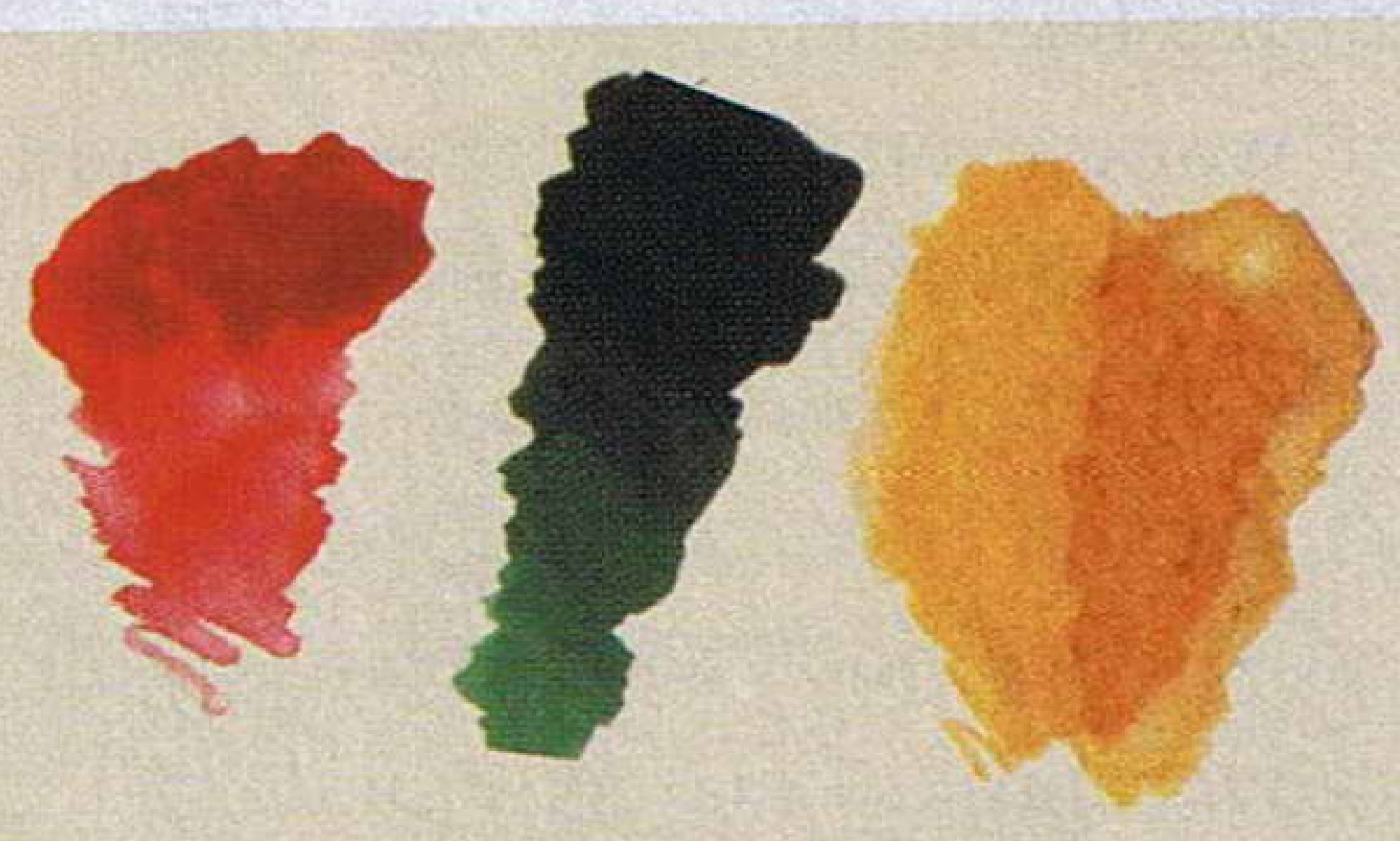


Wolves of Orboros



Skorne

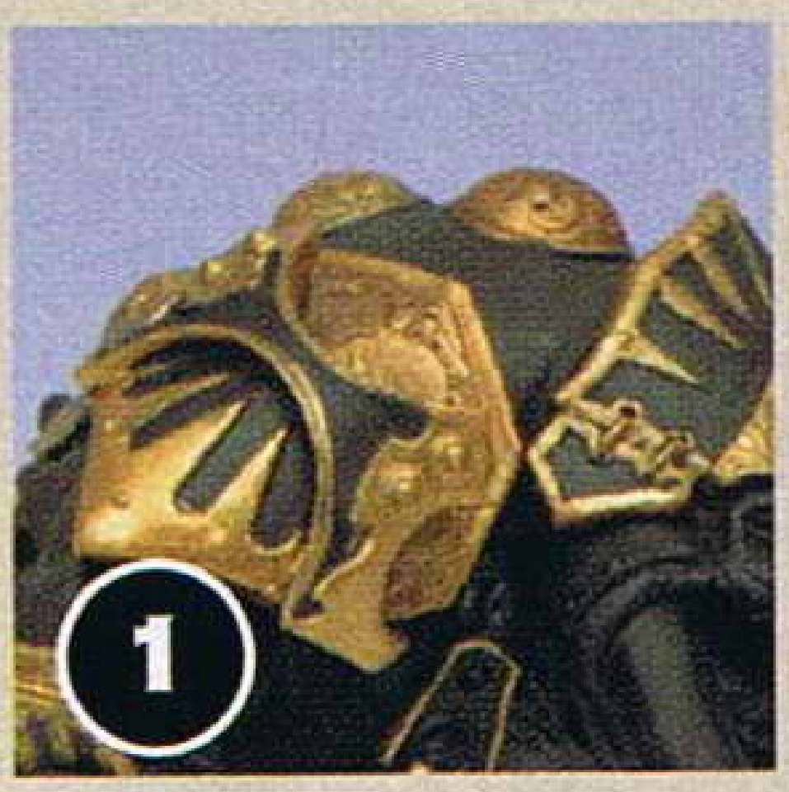
Red and gold are the dominant colours for the Skorne faction. It's not a primary red like the one used on Khador armies, but a deeper, richer tone that gives the miniatures a unique feel. The red armour is contrasted with some plain black areas and bright yellow-gold details for contrast. The Skorne colour scheme is really strong and distinctive and is applied to all of the clothing and armour to give the faction a really powerful, unified look that is actually just as military looking as some of the Warmachine factions – and far more so than any of the other Hordes factions. There are of course other colors to add to this – the skin of the Skorne themselves is pale and almost albino in coloring, and the beasts they drive into battle are various different colors. The example shown on this page are the huge, lumbering Titans. Their skin is mid grey, like an elephant or rhino, but it can be painted with slightly pinkish undertones to give it a more natural feel.

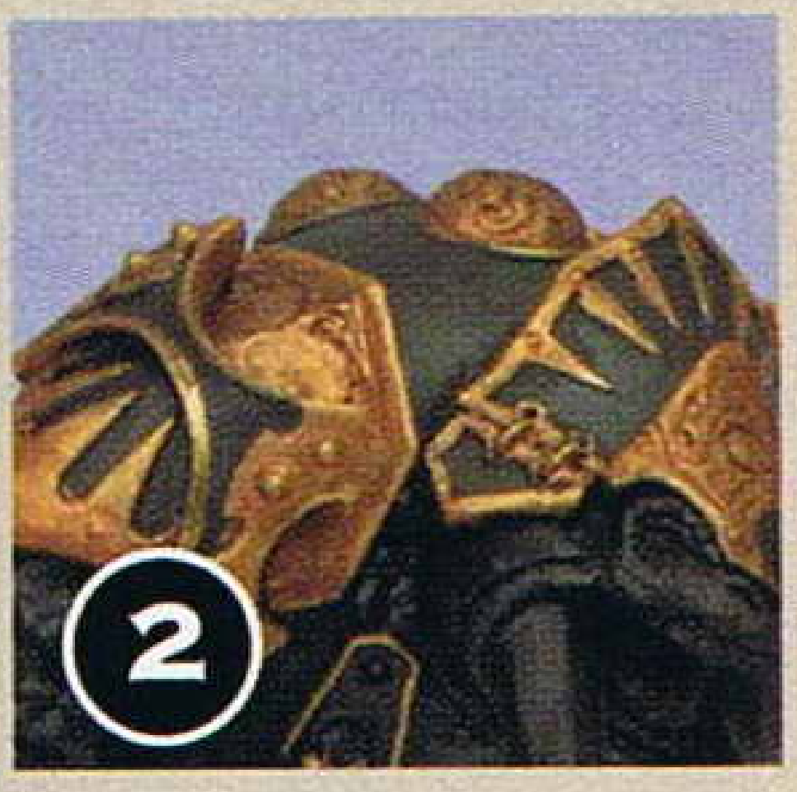


These three swatches show the simple but striking Skorne colour scheme - a deep red that is coupled with black and bright gold. A shading wash of brown and yellow in has been applied to half of the gold to show how much richer it makes the colour.

Skin tones on Skorne

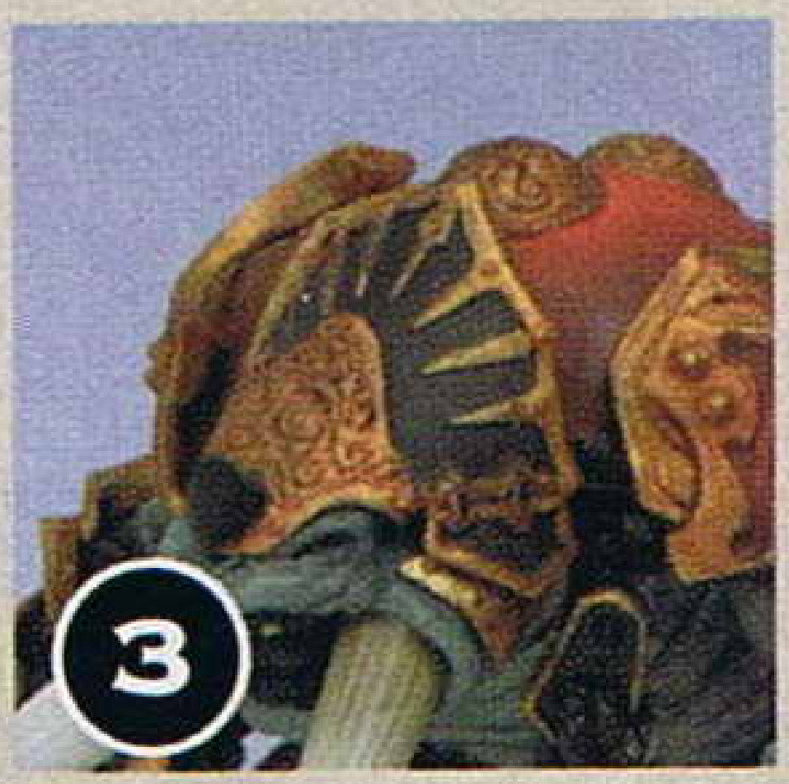
Skorne skin is almost completely different from the pale skinned Nyss who are pure white with cold grey shading – by contrast, the shaded areas on the Skorne are pinkish in colour giving a totally different look. The best way to achieve this effect is to base coat with pure white – then you aren't fighting with the black undercoat to bring the colour up to the lighter tones. The shading and details are brought out with a wash – the mix we used is Elf Flesh with just a tiny spot of Blood Red added to make it slightly more pink and some matt medium to make it flow better on the figure. When this is dry the highlights were built up with Elf Flesh and white – and the top highlights are pure Skull White. The lips are picked out in a darker colour to give some contrast and the eyes have dark shading added to give a dramatic and sinister effect.

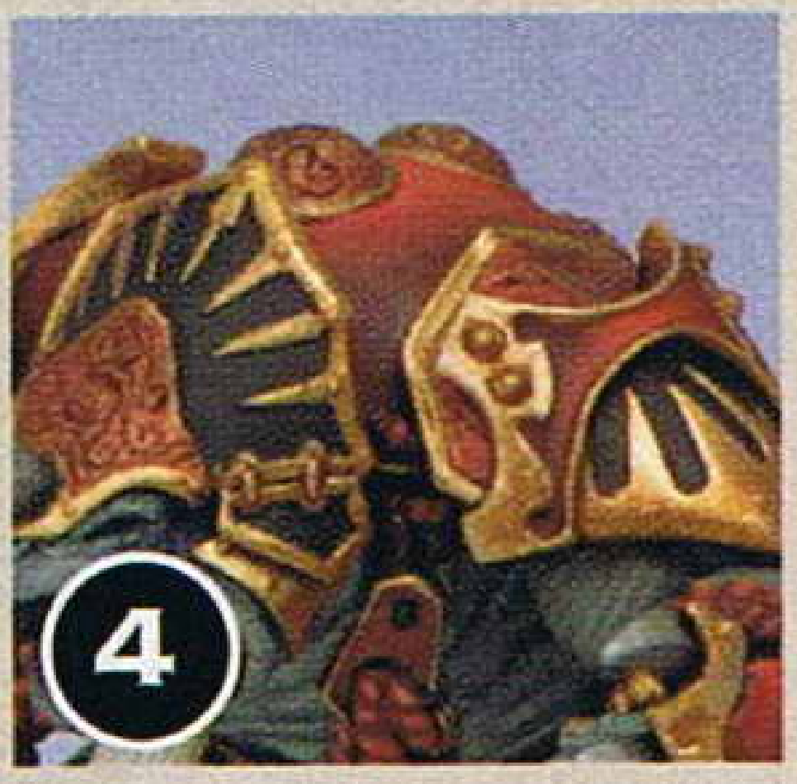




1 - The armor edges and textured plates are base coated with Shining Gold - the centre areas are kept black. Try to be as neat as possible here.

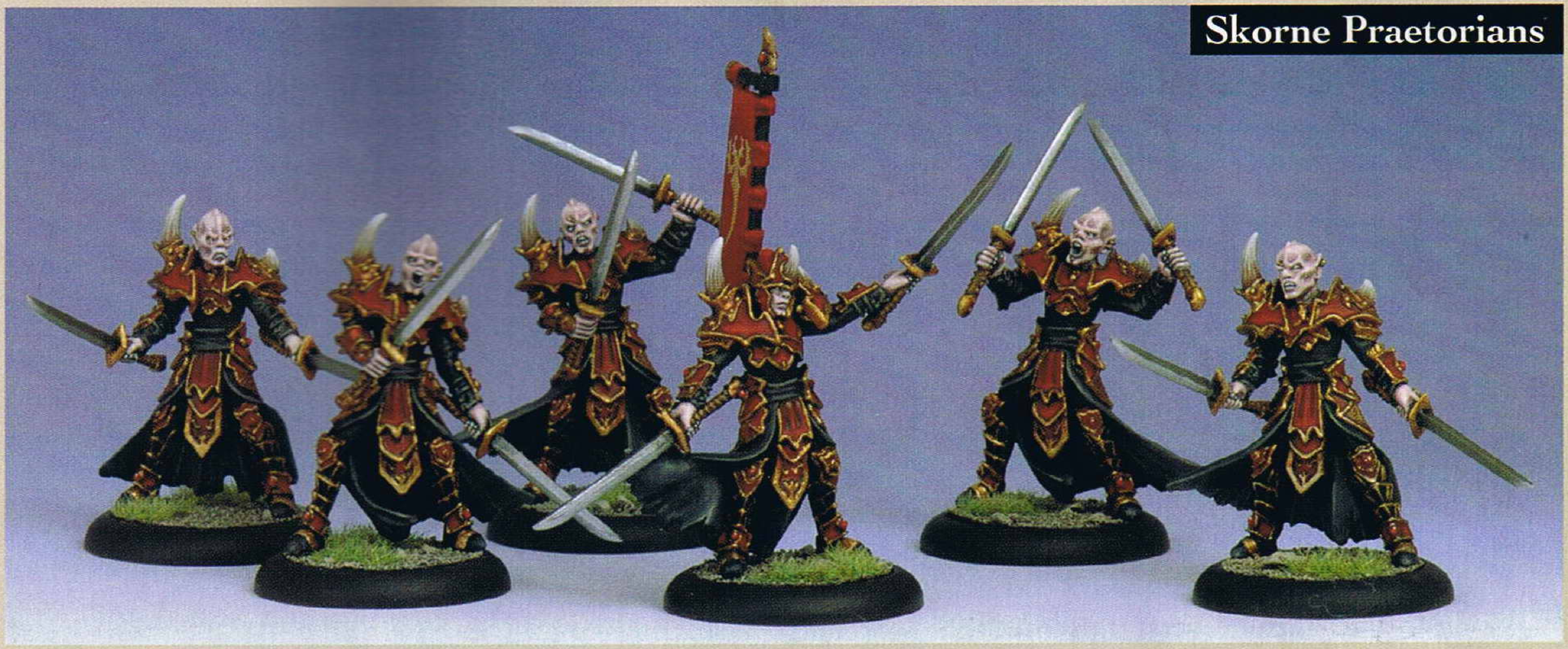
2 - All of the gold areas are washed over with a mix of yellow and brown ink



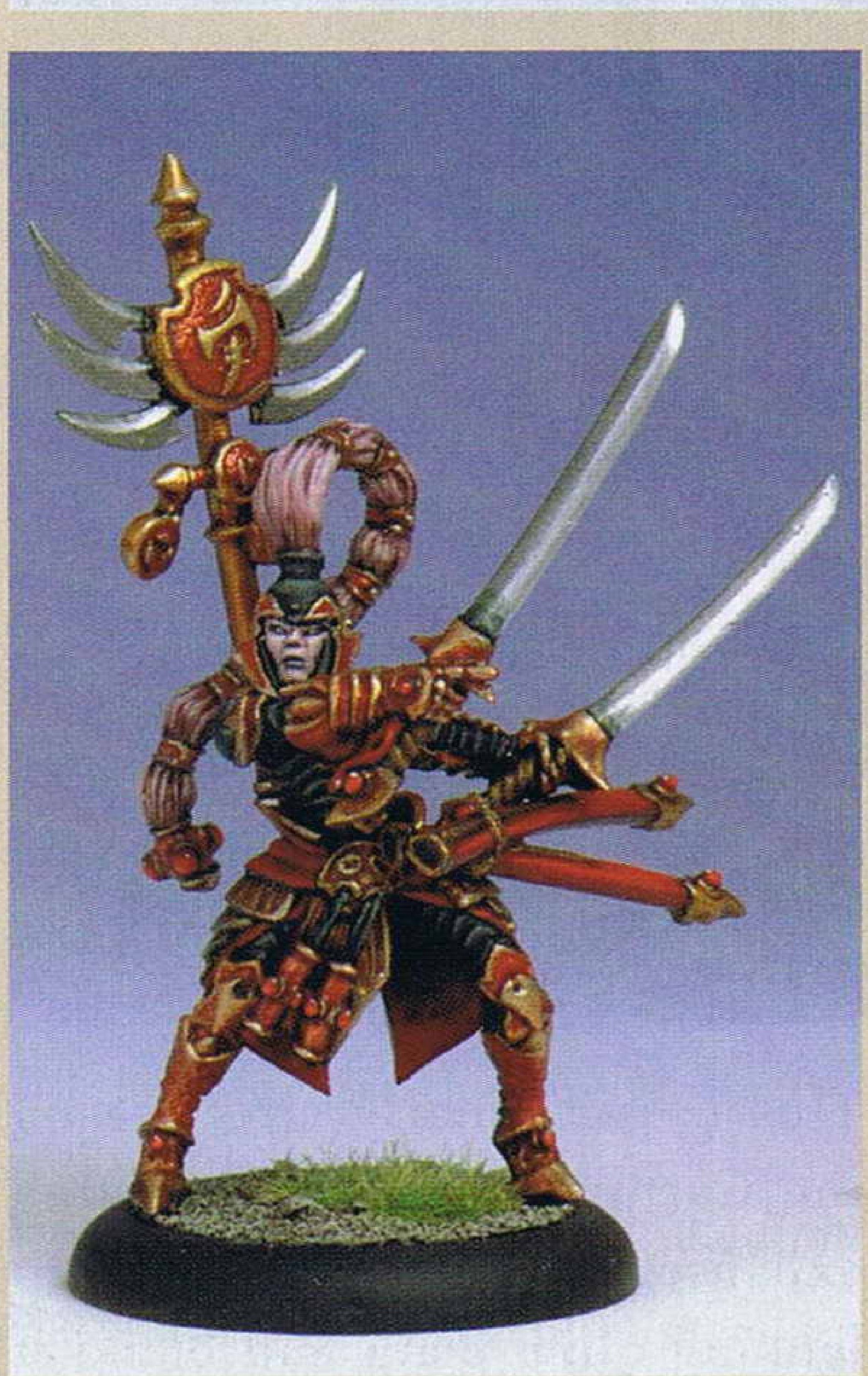


3 - The red areas of armor are base coated with a mix of Blood Red and Scab Red, then highlighted by adding red ink and Blood Red - then yellow and white are added for the lighter tones.

4 - The gold edes are highlighted with Shining Gold and Mithril Silver. The textured areas are glazed with red ink . The red armor is glazed with red and yellow ink to add some depth.



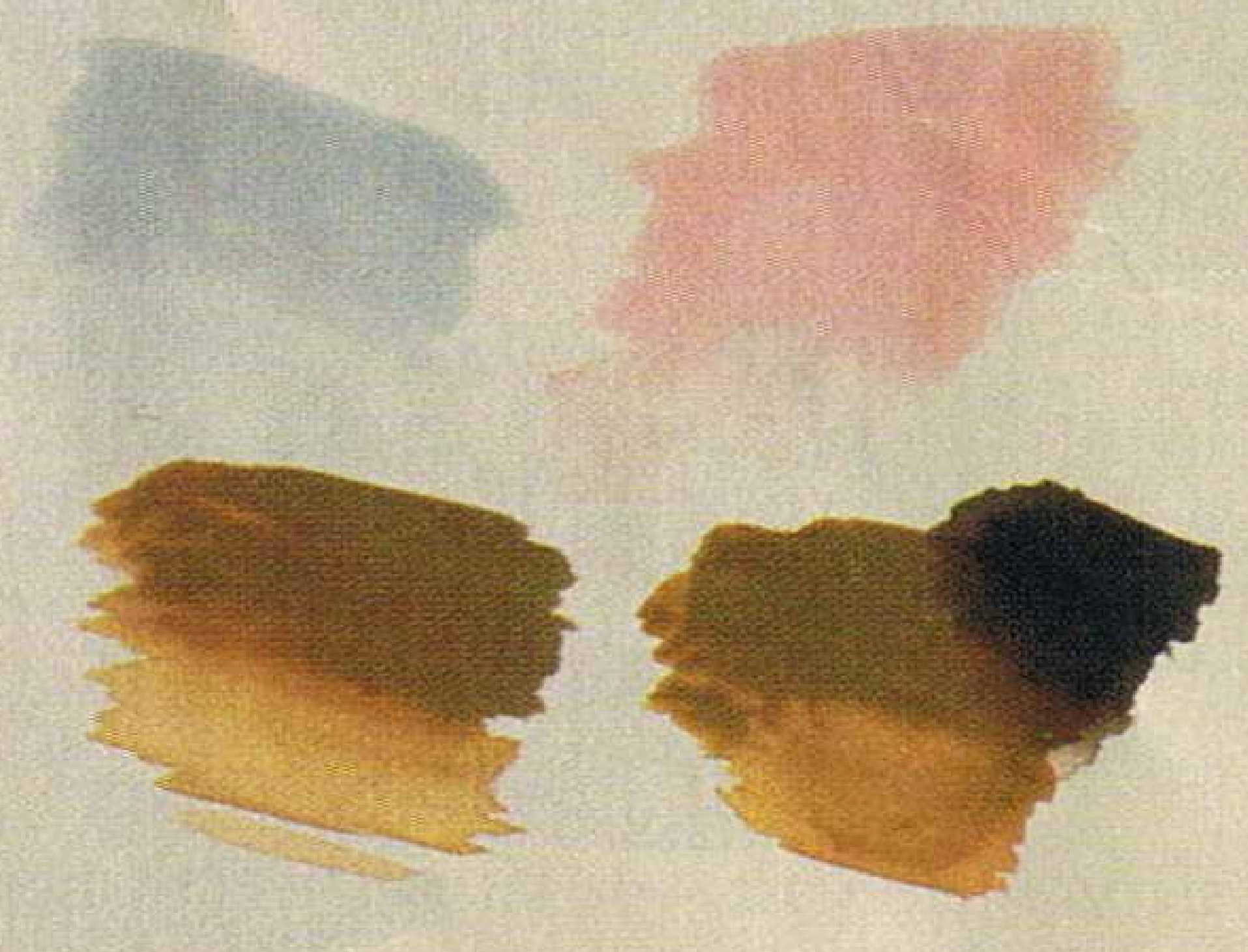
Skorne Praetorians



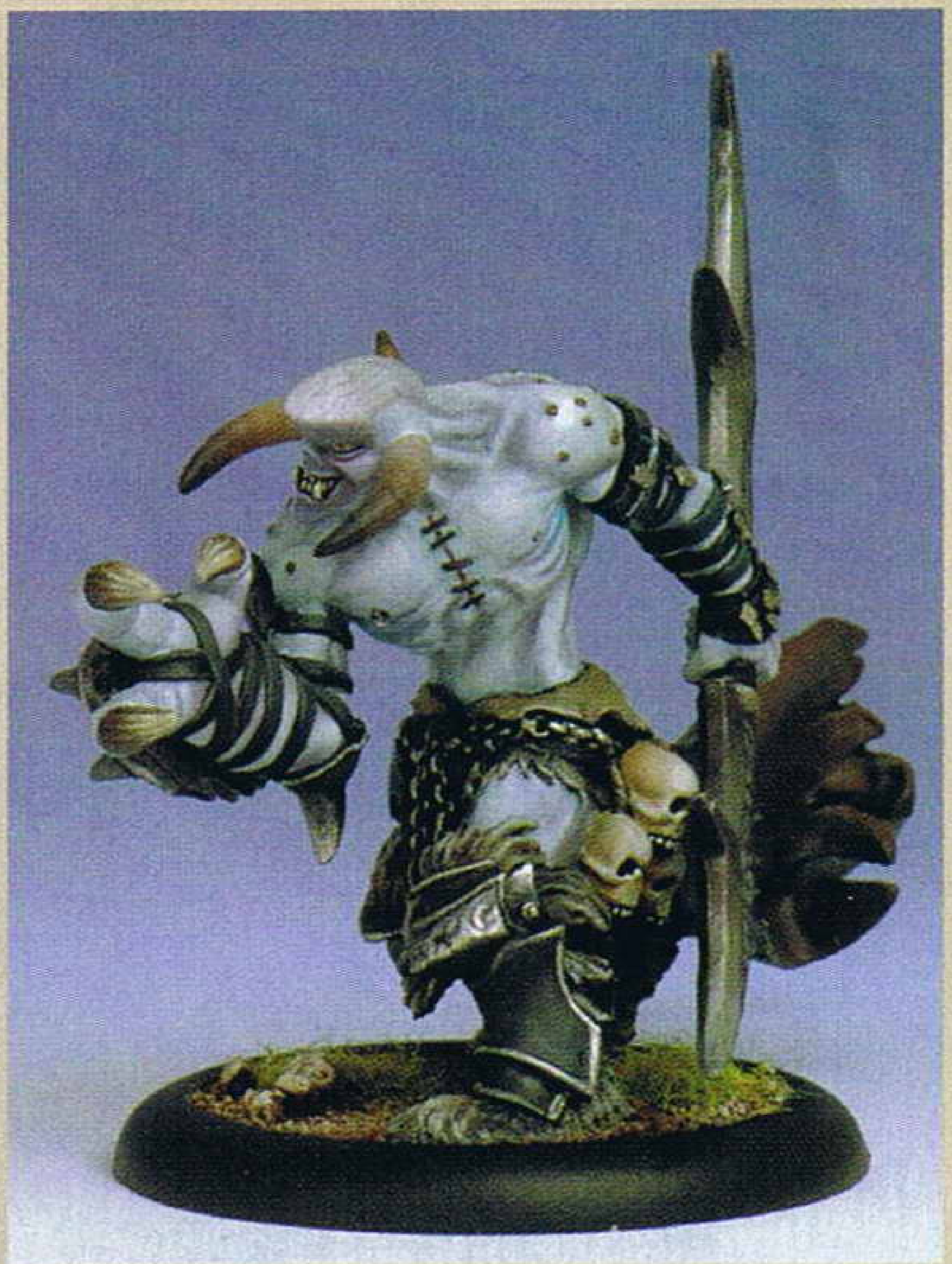
Makeda's armour was painted in just the same way as the Praetorians, but a little more attention was given to the subtlety of the highlights and shading as she is a character figure.

LEGION

The color scheme for the Legion is very striking and monochromatic – the skin on all the troops, characters, and beasts is very white and most of the armor and clothing is either very dark or black. Of course there are some subtleties that stop the scheme from being totally black and white – the skin is mainly shaded with cold grey tones and the beasts have areas of pinkish colors in the more flexible areas of their hides. Similarly, the dark tones are not just black but are shaded and highlighted with slightly different colors gives some variation while still maintaining the overall feel. It's perhaps the most striking of all the colour schemes for Hordes, but only if handled with some subtlety. If you carry the black and white scheme too far, the miniatures will end up looking a little bland – which would be a shame as there are some really characterful pieces in the range. One thing that is really good to bring out is the cold and icy feel of the miniatures – the Blighted Nyss are from the snow bound mountains to the north of the Iron Kingdoms and the color schemes are reminiscent of that land. As mentioned previously, the skin on both the Nyss and the Blighted beasts is white, but shaded with cold grey – that is grey that has some blue in it. This blue tinge is subtle though, you don't want to end up with sky blue miniatures! Similarly, the black areas are highlighted with dark blue tones to keep the color palette consistent. There is some relief to this scheme (as there always needs to be – limited palette miniatures always work far better if they have a small amount of another color to create a sharp contrast), some areas of the hide of the beasts are painted in a bright, almost pink flesh-tone. A small amount of brown is also introduced into the scheme on both the Nyss themselves and the beasts. This is done with some subtlety, but it's just enough the contrast the cold and icy feel of the rest of the miniatures.



Top - These swatches show the cold grey skin tone and the pinkish colour that is added to the flexible parts of the joints.
Bottom - Apart from black on the clothing and armour of the troops and characters, the beasts have a more natural color that is applied to the hard areas of hide and carapace - this is a mid-brown that is faded through to black on the tops of the spikes and plates.



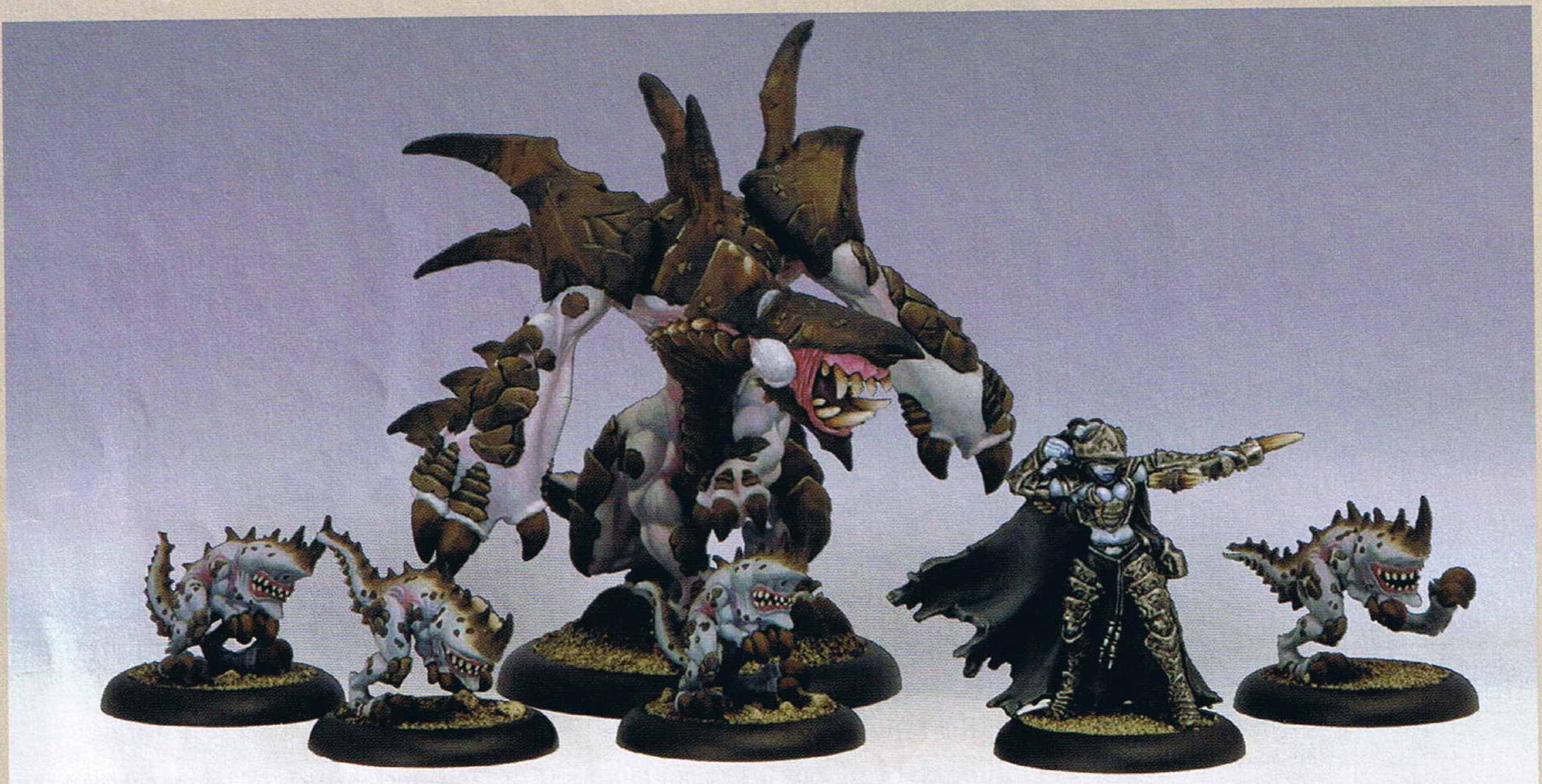
Thagrosh has been painted with the same skin colors as the Carniviean – white shaded with cold grey. The armour is painted in a platinum color – this is a mix of Shining Gold and Chaimail, shaded with a mix of blue and brown ink.

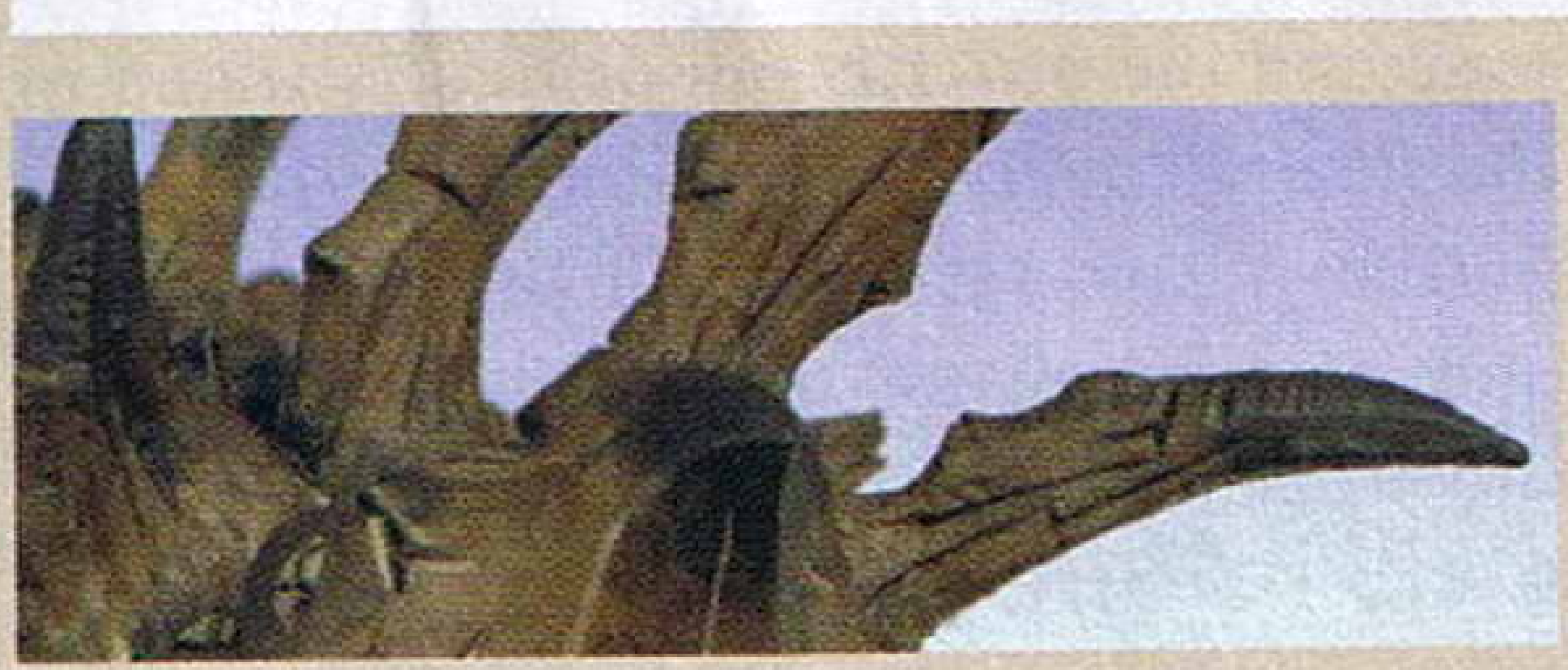
Nyss Skin

Painting the skin on the Blighted Nyss is not too difficult a task, but there are a couple of things that you need to watch for. The result you are looking for is a pure white skin colour but with cold underlying tones – the trick here is to get the shading deep enough to bring out the details and give some depth, but not so much as it makes the overall effect grey. It's easiest to start with a colour that is almost pure white, maybe with just a hint of cold grey – then wash over with a deeper tone applied quite thinly to bring out the detail.

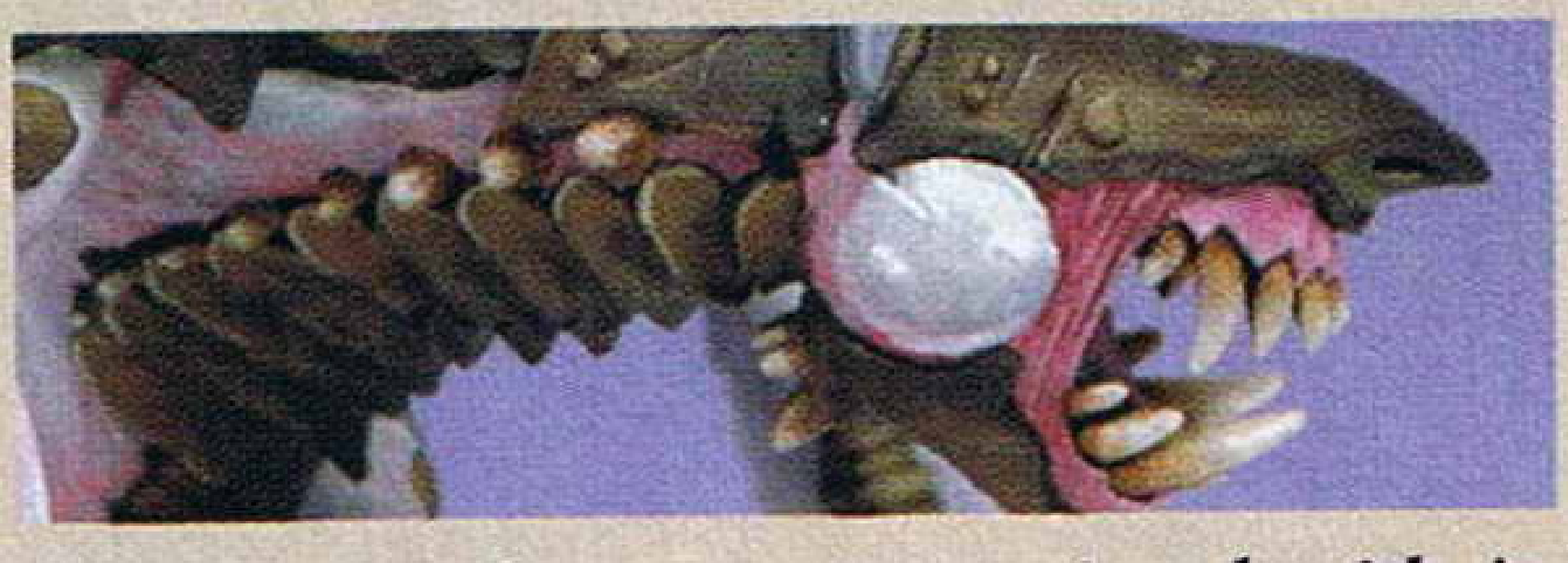
Carnivean skin

The hide on the beasts in the Legion is painted in much the same way as the skin on the Nyss. The difference with the monsters is that some pinkish flesh tones are added into the colour scheme round the teeth and gums and on the flexible areas of skin. This is particularly effective on the Carnivean, where the large expanses of hide could end up looking quite plain and bland if they weren't given something for contrast. The best way to apply this effect is to thin down the flesh colour and carefully blend it into the desired areas – so you will apply the colour with one brush and use a second brush to carefully thin-out the edge.

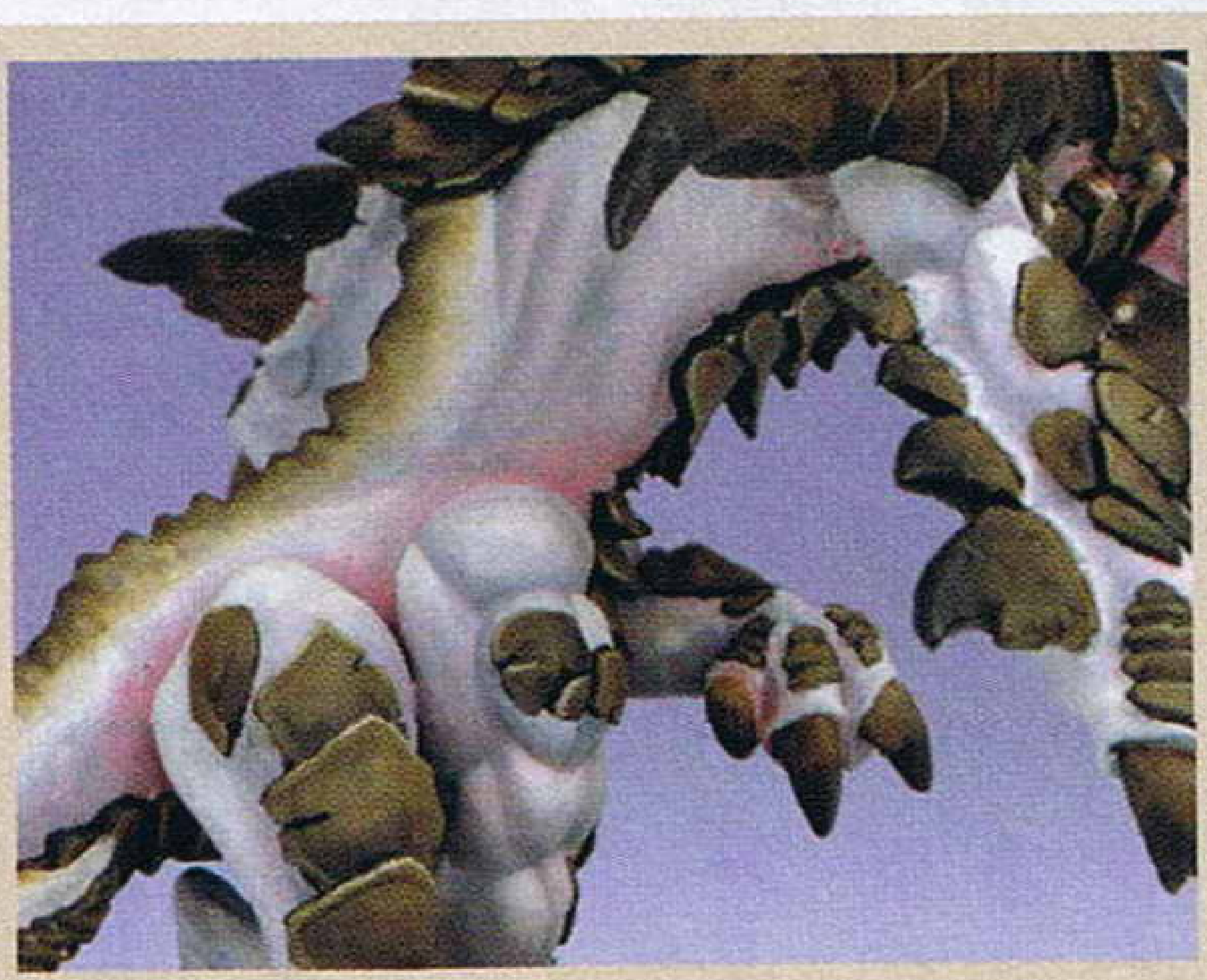




The Legion colour scheme is primarily black and white, but on the beasts, it better to use a more natural tone of dark brown faded through to black at the tips of the spines.



The gums and tongue are painted with in the same pink colour that is blended into the skin, this colour is then highlighted by adding white.



This photograph show the contrast with the usual skin colour - which is white shaded with cold grey and the pinkish colour that is added round the flexible join areas. The skin is shaded and highlighted as normal and then a mix of Elf Flesh and Blood Red is carefully blended into the recesses.

Legion Striders

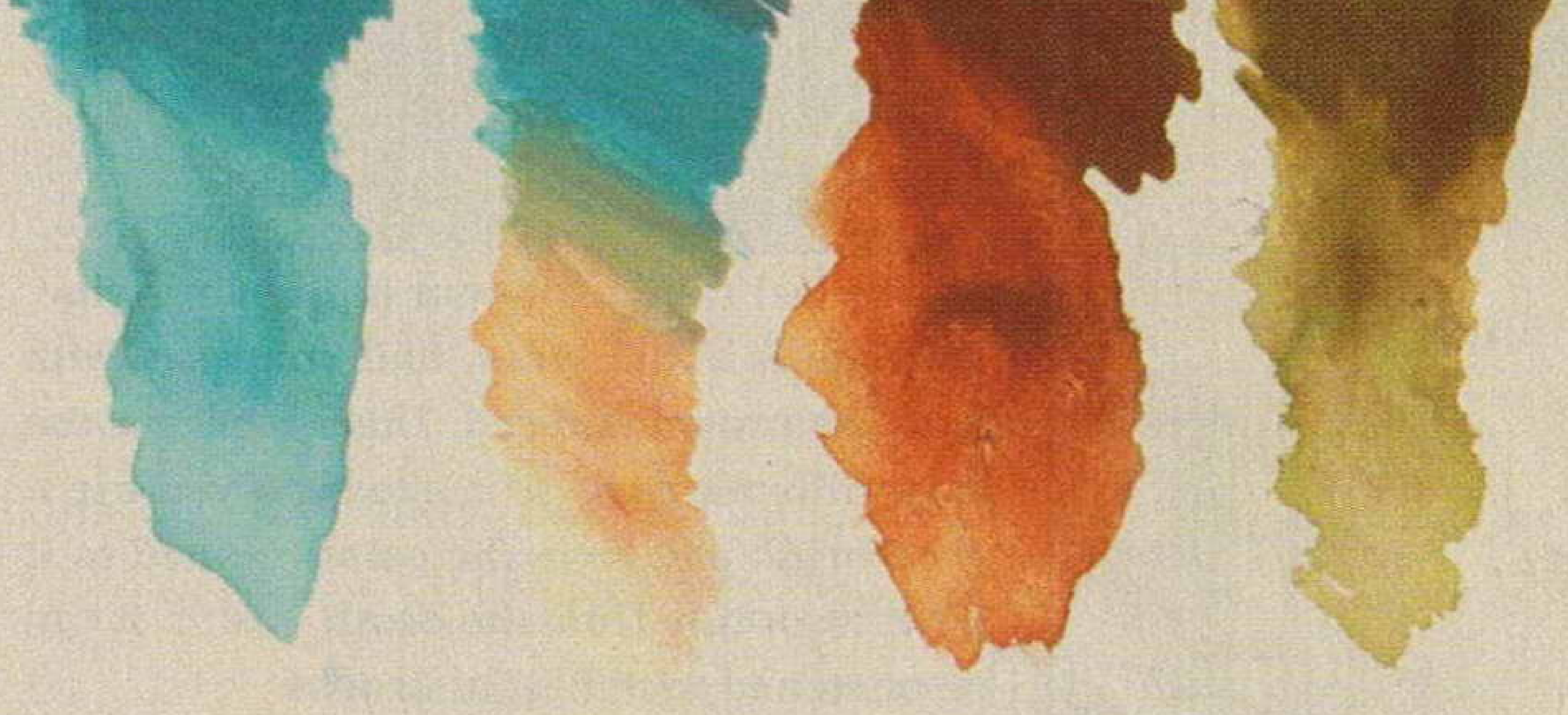
TROLLBLOODS

The whole of the Trollblood faction is tied together with a very distinct palette of colors – the trolls themselves all have various different tones of greyish blue skin and this is contrasted with a warm mid brown on the clothing and armor. One of the main features of the trollkin troops and characters are the different tartans that are wrapped around their bodies – these have different patterns, or Qutari as they are correctly called, depending on what Kriel they are from but are all painted with a similar palette of colors within a certain group. The main Kriel color for the miniatures shown is warm mid brown, the actual paint used is GW Bestial Brown and this is also the color that has been thinned down and applied to the armor as rust. The rust and brown tones are just a foil for the skin color though – and when you look at the miniature it's the skin that really stands out and creates a unique look. One of the potential pit-falls of painting miniatures with blue skin tones is that is can easily come out looking "false' and like plastic. The best way to get round this is to add some natural tones to soften the color and give it a more realistic look. The blue/grey skin tones are highlighted with flesh colour instead of white, and you can add some slightly red tones to the shading.

Trollkin and Troll skin

The skin of the troll races is a distinctive blue/grey colour which gets darker and more intense the larger the specimen. So Whelps and Pygmy Trolls have the lightest skin color and Dire Trolls the deepest. When painting the studio trolls we base coated with a mid tone of Enchanted Blue mixed with Slate Grey 32C. A good even coat is required - not patchy. Next this color was washed over with a darker tone to pick out the muscles. Adding Regal Blue and Scorched Brown to the base color provides a nice color for this. We add a little matte medium to washes and plenty of water so the paint only defines the muscles and does not change

Blues - These show the Trollking flesh color used, notice how this is a slightly grey-blue. The swatch on the right show how the highlight colors are added with flesh tones an the shading has a spot of deep red.
Browns - Two different shades of brown are used for clothing , one is the standard rust-brown colour and the other is a colder contrasting color.



The usual Trollkin skin colour has been altered slightly for Doomshaper – he has a more green coloring, but still some of the areas round the face have been painted with pinkish skin tones to give a natural look to the miniature.

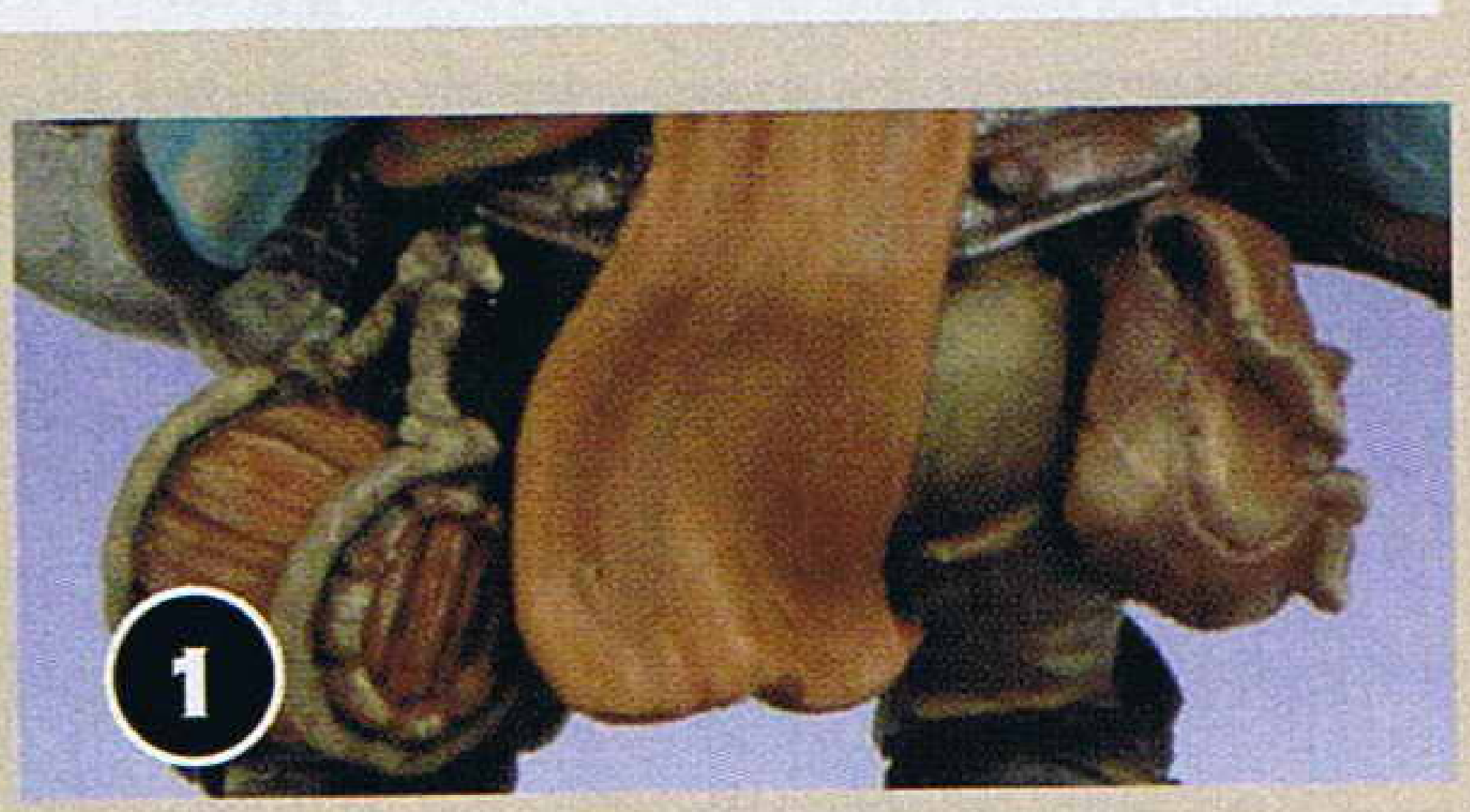
Trollblood Scattergunners

the overall color of the miniature. Highlights are added to the tops of the muscles by adding Flesh to the base color. We use a Dwarf Flesh but this sometimes has a tendency to turn the blue a little green. If this happens, use a spot of Blood Red with your Dwarf Flesh. Finally we added a top highlight of elf flesh to the very tops of the muscles. Flesh tones are added to the chin and lip of the trolls and trollkin for a more natural look.

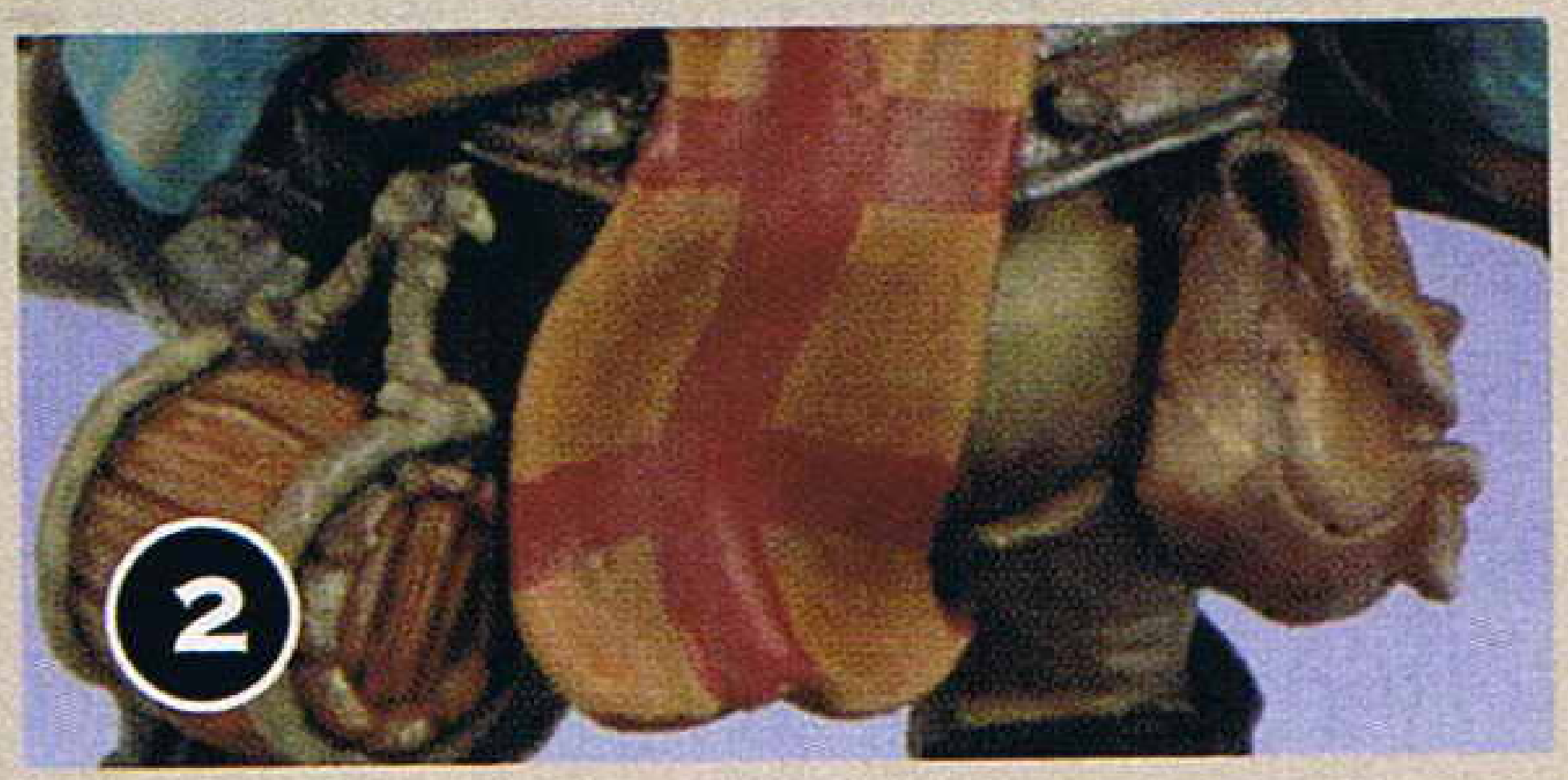
Tartans

Painting tartans is one of those things that seems to be almost impossible for the army painter, it just looks too complex and time consuming – but it's really not all that hard with the proper approach. It really is worth planning in the extra time in your painting schedule to add some tartan to the trollkin – it's a dominant feature of the race and adds some great detail and character to the miniatures, they also need something strong to contrast with the unusual skin colour.

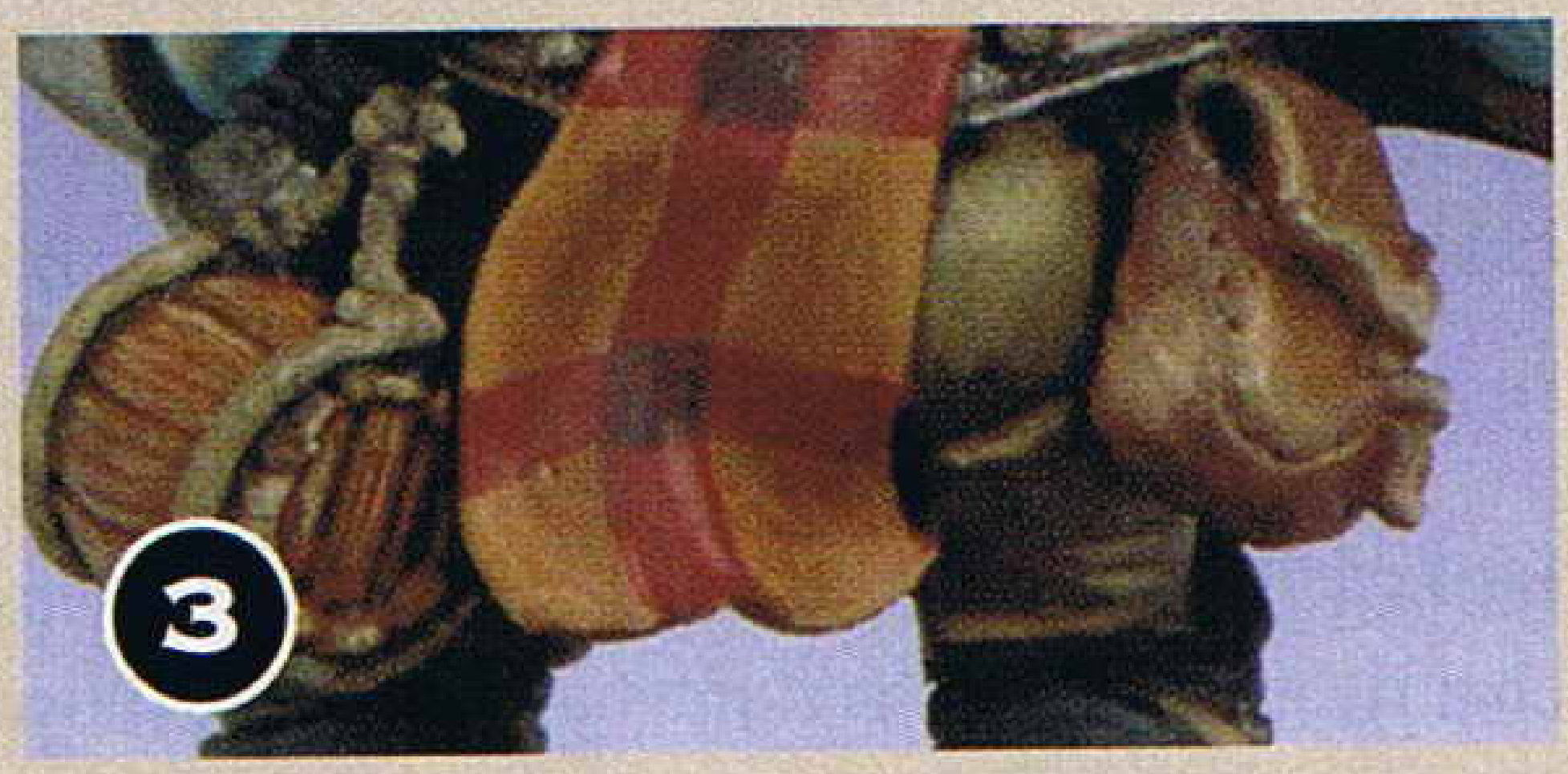
When painting tartan, as with any freehand, you should use your paint reasonably thin and when painting those nerve wracking lines, just let your brush go with the contours of the material. Sometimes the creases will be sculpted too deeply to get a brush in there easily so don't try - painting the tops of the creases will usually suffice. Another thing to think about when painting straight lines on a miniature is the direction your brush is going, it's far easier to paint a line vertically over creases than it is paint side to side. It just comes more naturally to move the brush in this direction. Turn your miniature as you are painting so you are painting those horizontal lines vertically. Most people will find their lines to be quite shaky at first but don't worry, it is easy to go back in with the base colour and touch up. Another good tip is to choose colours for your tartan that have good coverage, preventing the need to go back and over paint your initial line.



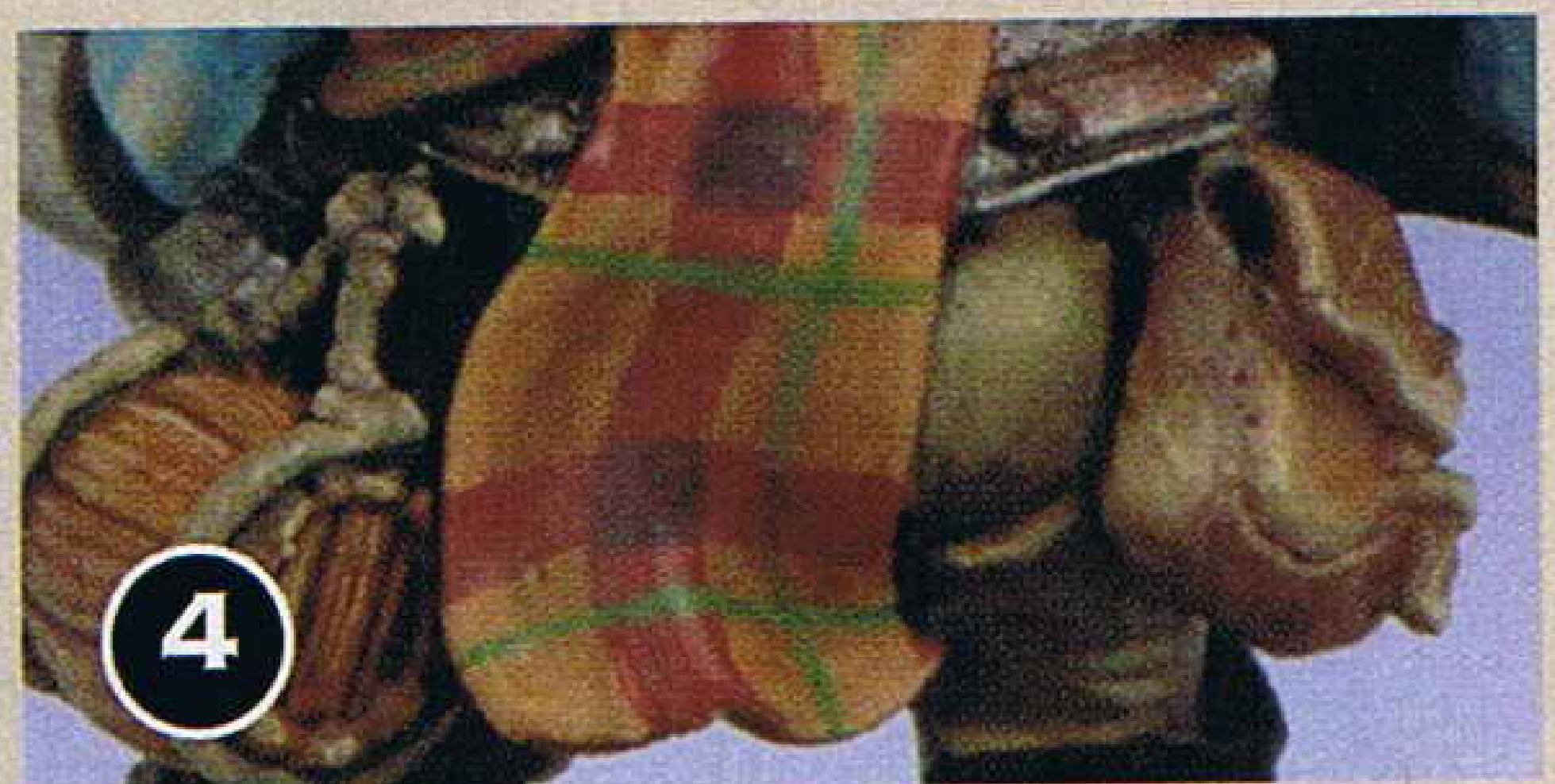
1 - The material is highlighted and shaded as normal, in this case the base color was Bestial Brown and this is lightened by adding Foundry Spearshaft



2 - The broad bands are painted in with Scab Red. Try to be as neat as possible, but the edges can be tidied up with Bestial Brown

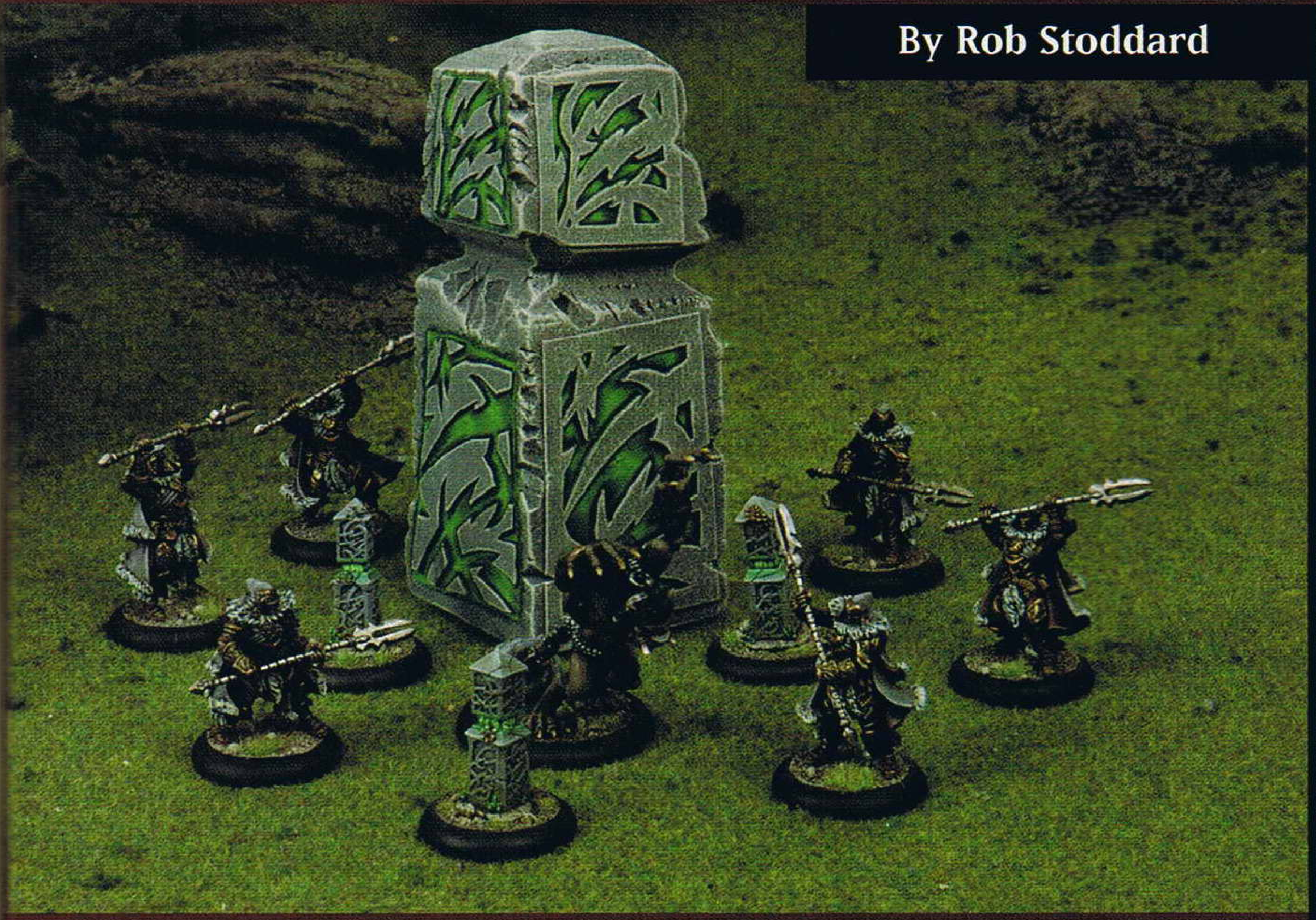


2 - The broad bands are painted in with Scab Red. Try to be as neat as possible, but the edges can be tidied up with Bestial Brown



4 - The last step is to paint in the pin-stripe. This one is a mid green that contrasts with both the brown and red. This is perhaps the most difficult part, so make sure you use a good brush and have the paint thinned so it flows smoothly from the brush. Again, it can be neatened with Bestial Brown.

STANDING STONES



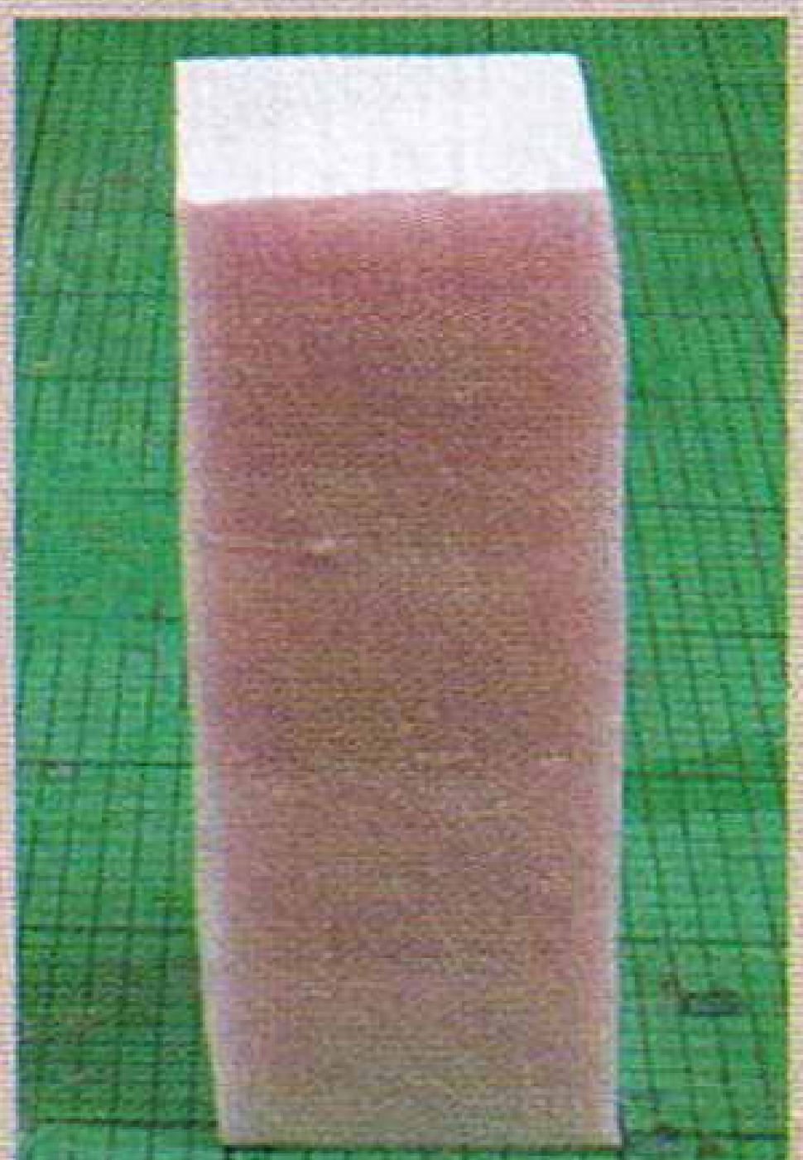
By Rob Stoddard

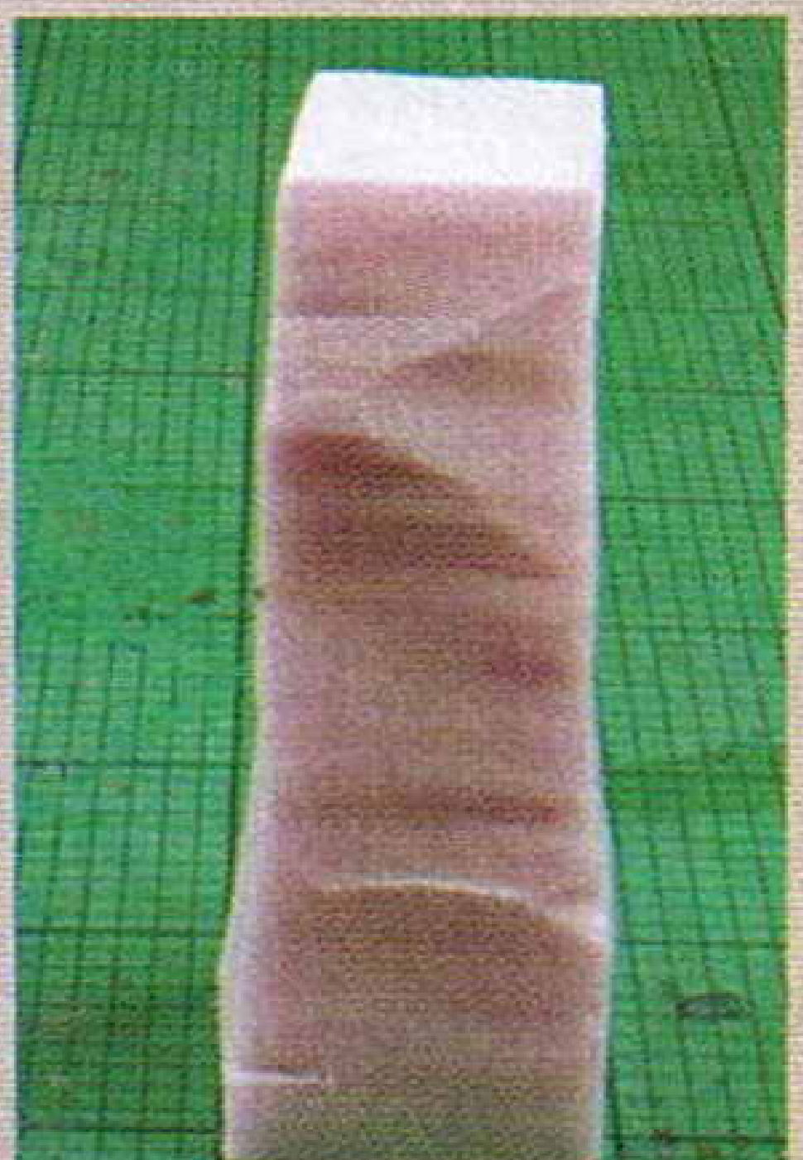
With the unrelenting HORDES of the Iron Kingdoms bearing down upon us we wanted to prepare you for the coming onslaught. We have showcased buildings, docks, and watchtowers. Those sentries in their watchtowers better pay attention! We are going back to nature and the feral side of Immoren has its fair share of structures that can make a tabletop come to life.

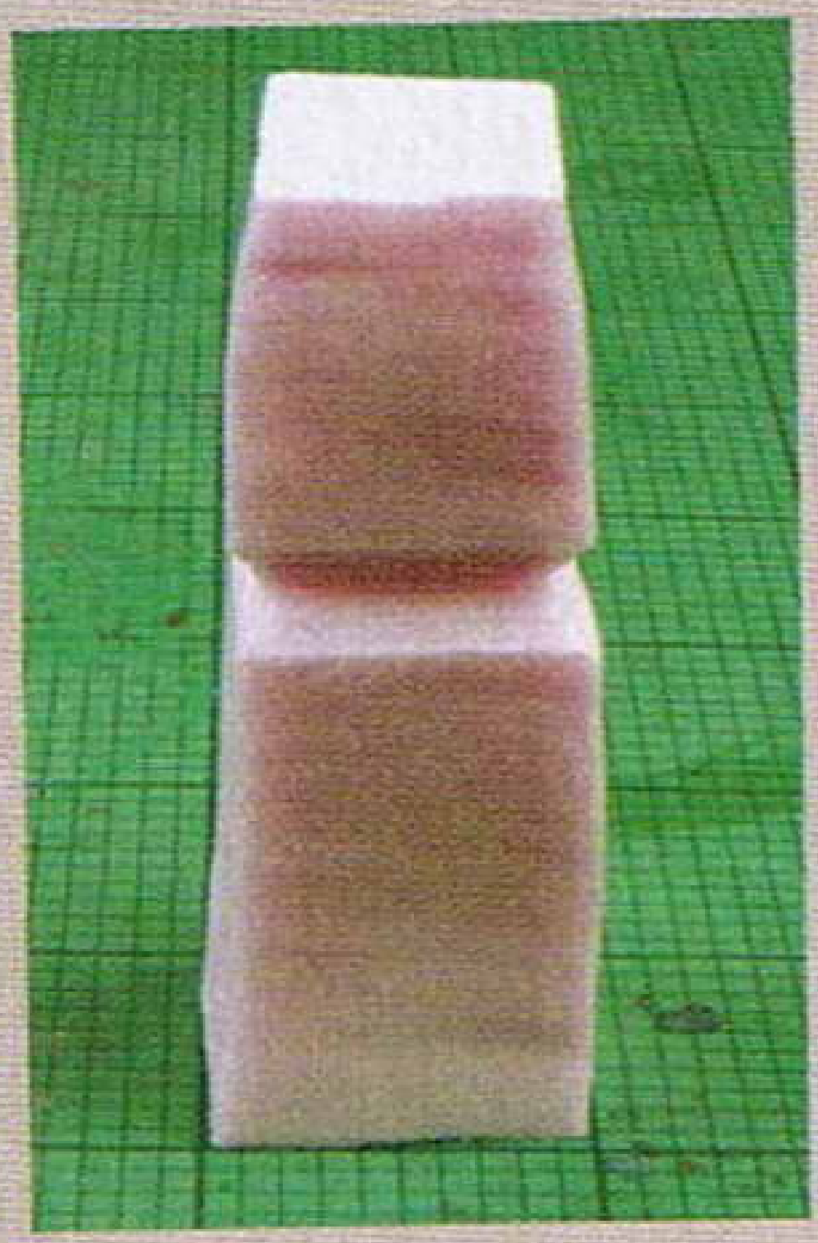
Today we will be chiseling Standing Stones, imposing monuments used by the druids of the Circle Orboros in their occult rituals. Similar carved and ornamented stones can be created for each of the HORDES factions to provide interesting faction-specific terrain to a battlefield. We will be showcasing a few basic ways to make them as unique as our armies. As with most projects it takes a quick materials run and we can get underway. This time we will be using 2″ thick insulation foam, a hot foam cutter also known as a hotwire, our typical hobby knife, a hot glue-gun, a marker, a ballpoint pen, and a ruler. With everything gathered and in hand we are ready.

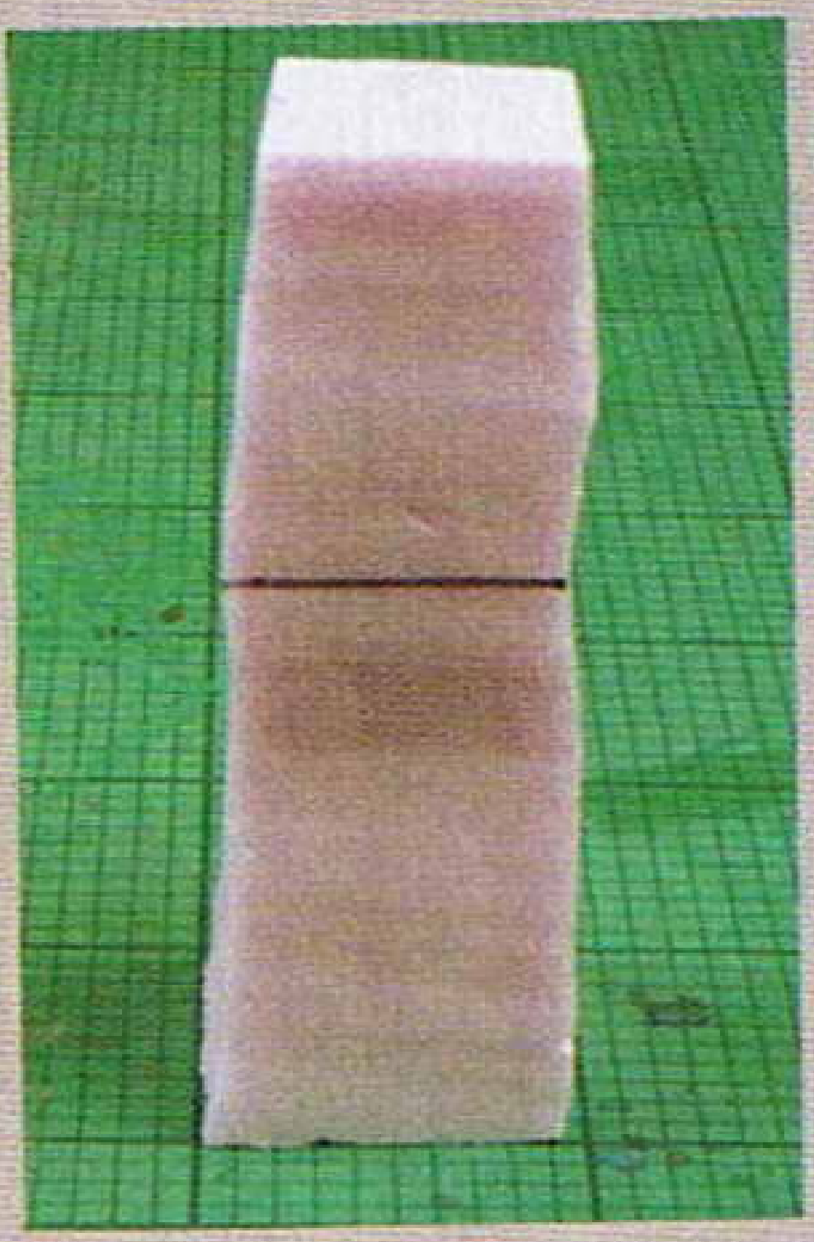
Our first standing stone will be constructed using an extremely fast and simple method. We start by cutting out a rectangle of insulation foam. A good beginning size is 2″ X 2″ and approximately 5″ high. (2) Making other standing stones of varying sizes is encouraged. With hotwire in hand we want to slope the sides of our stone. Going from top to bottom we want to cut each side so that the base of our stone will be wider than the top—since stones are natural objects the shape does not have to be precise. (3) If you desire a smoother overall look you could break out a ruler to mark angles and measurements. By experimenting with our angles we can create standing stones that appear to be toppling over or have had their center of gravity shifted. Having unique standing stones angled in different fashions can achieve a great look while maintaining uniformity to bring the table together.

Our next step is to create the stacked look that is prominent in our standing stones. We want the biggest portion of our standing stone on the bottom. We'll go 3″ up and mark our measurements on the foam. (4) We'll use this line as our center and cut at approximately a 45-degree angle towards the line and then back from it. Repeat



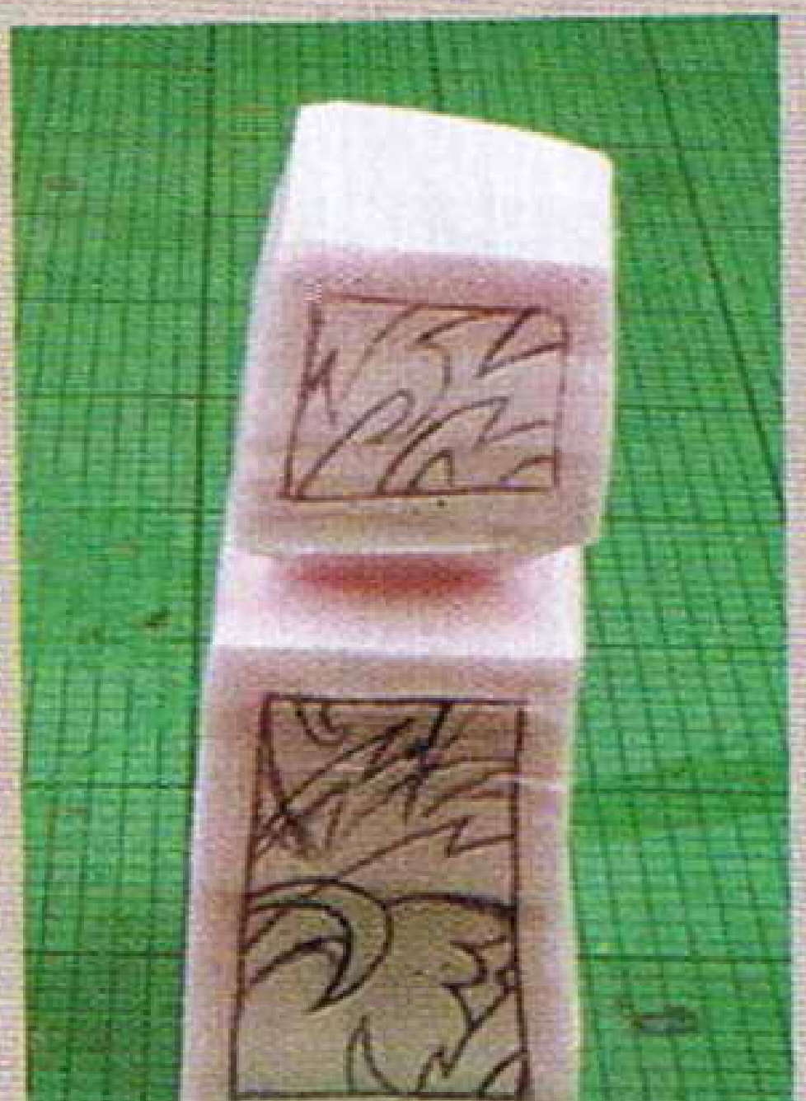




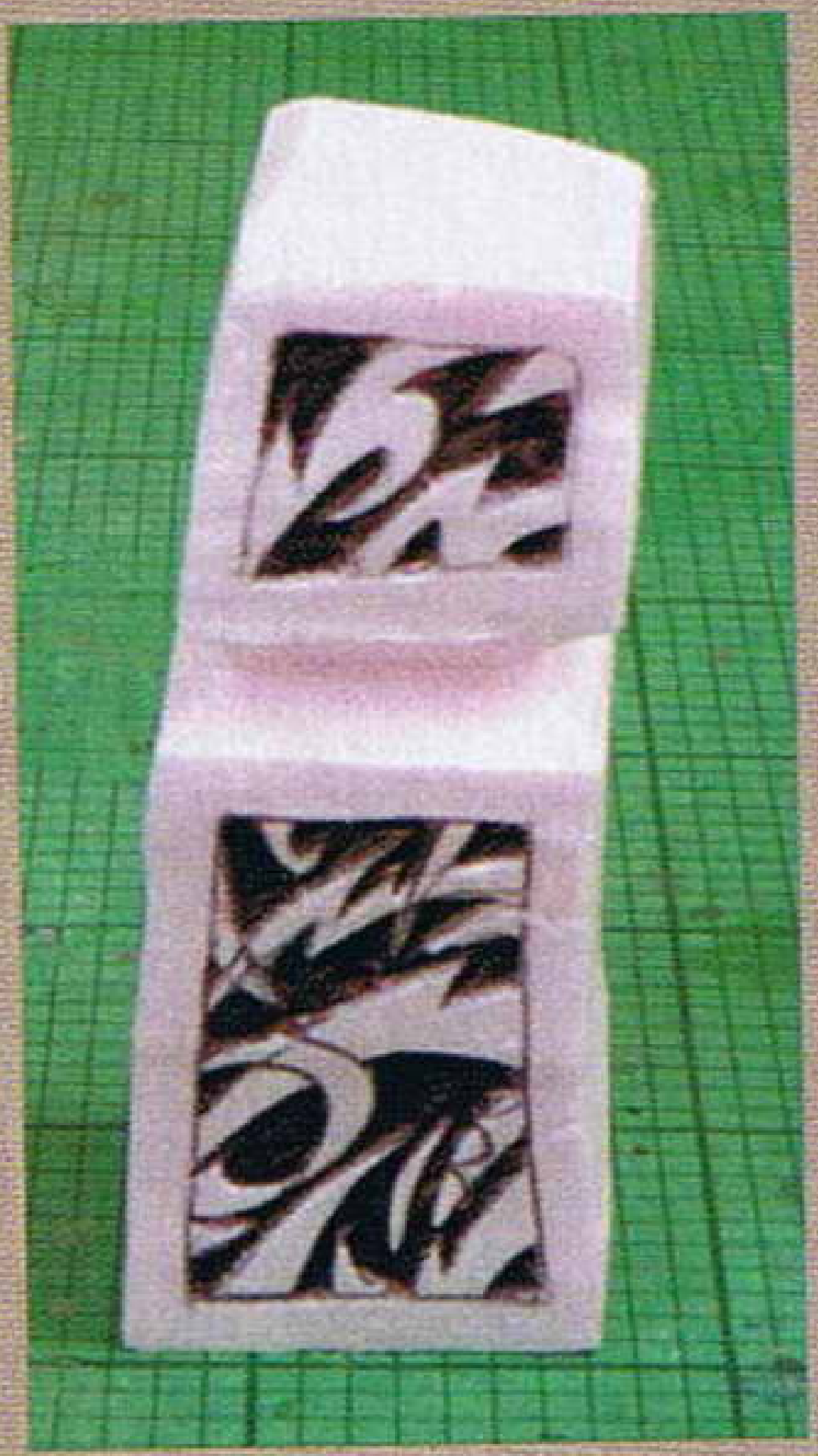


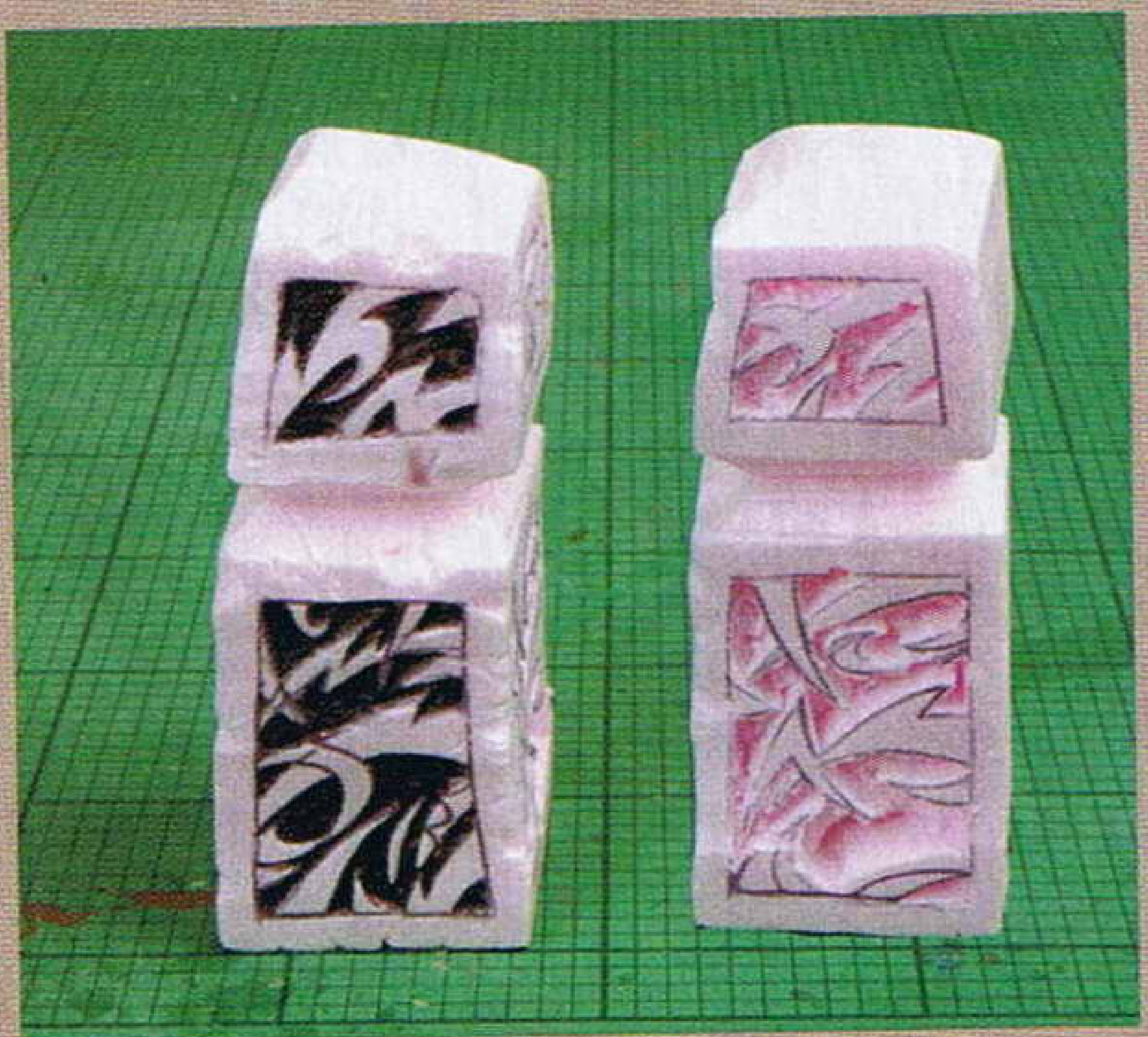
this process until the stone looks something like this. (5) Slopping the top of our stone is our final step to complete the basic shape. Utilizing our hotwire we cut angles up toward the middle of the stone to achieve this look. (6) However, if you prefer you can leave the top as is.

With our basic shape worked out we can provide details; this is where our ballpoint pen comes in. Lightly sketch out the desired design for your stone. (7) Some find it to their advantage to create their designs on paper before transferring them onto the terrain. With our designs sketched on there are a few ways we can precede. The first and simplest involves our trusty ballpoint pen. We want to be clear which areas of our design should be elevated and which should be recessed. The elevated portions of the design should be left alone while we essentially color between the lines. Everything that is recessed should be colored in with our ballpoint pen. Be careful not to apply too much pressure right away—it could rip the insulation foam. Instead we recommend gently going over areas multiply times until you are happy with the depth. In the end we should have a great looking design that is one step away from seeing paint. (8)



An alternative to our ballpoint pen method would be cutting along the edges of our design with a hobby knife. After we have outlined the entire design we can begin digging out the recessed areas with the tip of our knife. This method can create an exciting and more natural look. However this will make a mess that needs to be cleaned up. Ultimately the choice is up to you just how far you want to take your standing stones. Here are of both side-by-side. (9)

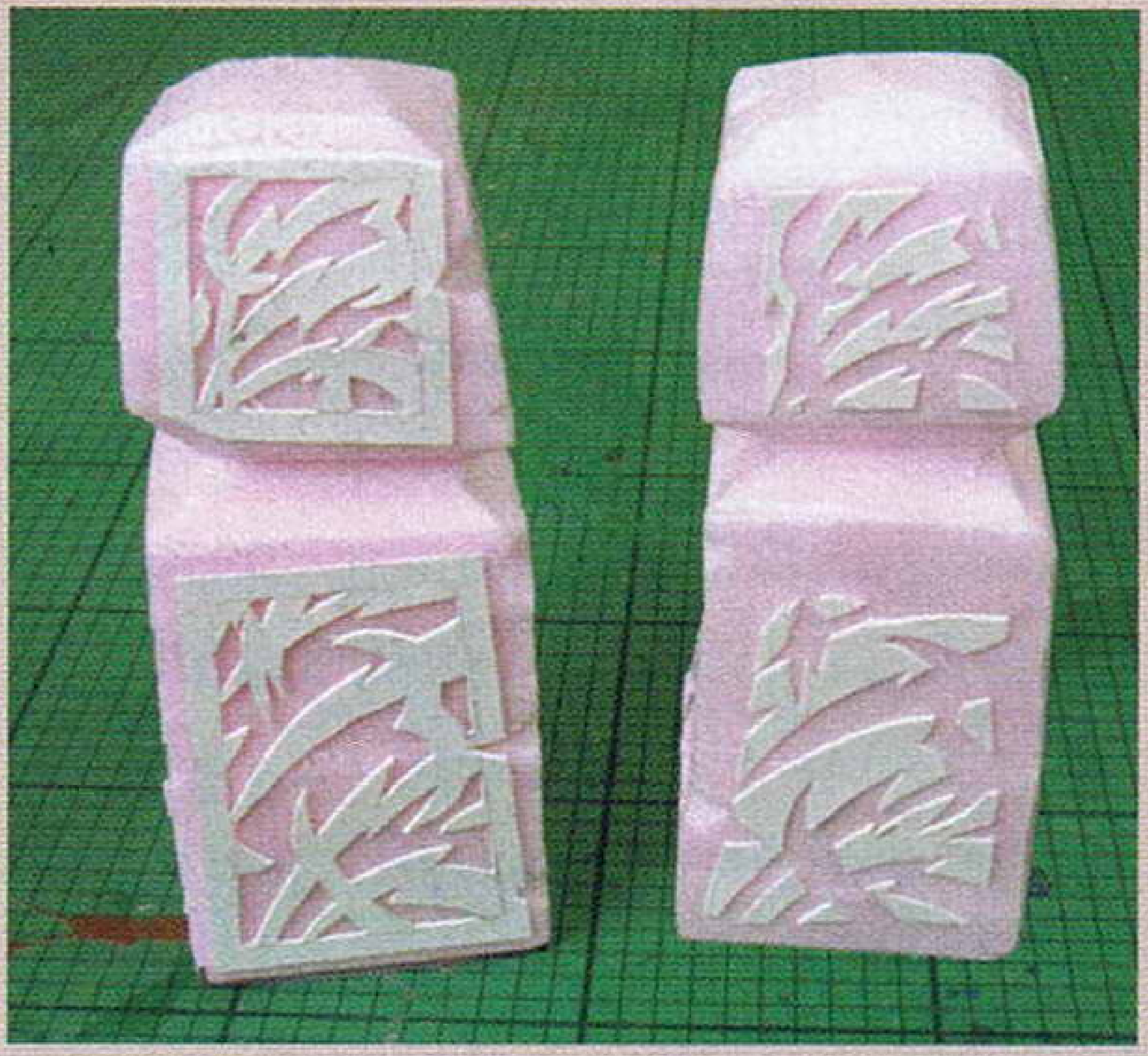


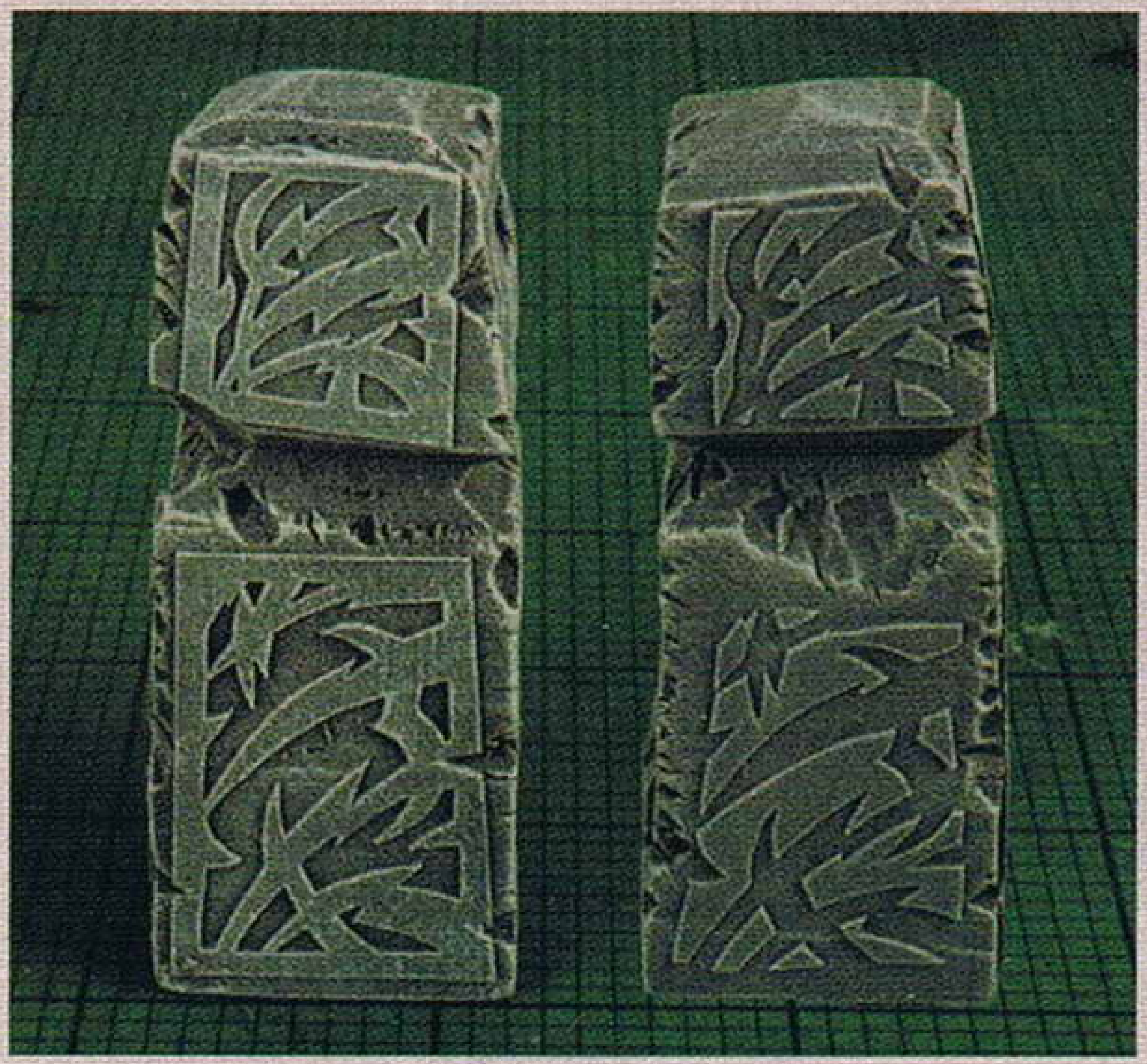


We just have a few more quick details to add here and there. These stones have been "standing" for centuries and should reflect their age. A few chips here and a few cracks there should provide character. These minor accents are easily accomplished with a good hobby knife. Cut into the foam at various angles and occasionally widen the cuts with a quick wiggle to vary the size and depth. (10)

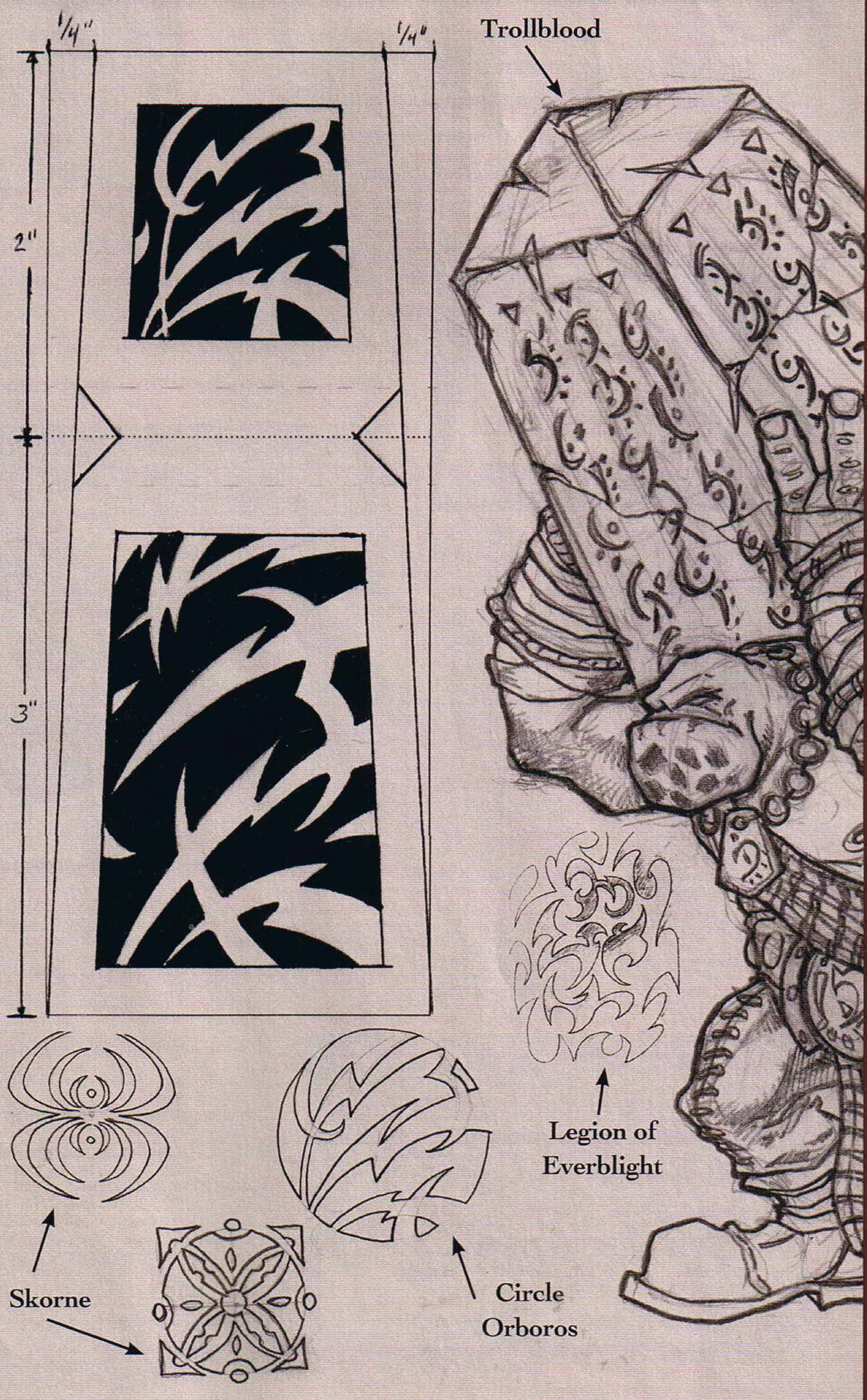
Before we paint our standing stones we'd like to highlight another method for creating these structures. The process is a bit more precise, but can end with a very impressive look. The basic construction of the stone remains the same; it's when we tackle the details that we'll change the process. We won't be adding our design directly on to the stone this time. Instead we want to add our design to some cardstock; cereal boxes and other food packaging work great for this. Once we have our design down we want to carefully cut it out with a hobby knife. If we work cautiously the interiors of our template will be extremely useful as well. We can utilize the interiors on a second stone. By strategically placing the pieces we can present an inverted version of our design and create another look. After cutting out the interiors we cut out the entire design with a frame to hold it together. We'll end up with two stones for the price of one. Here is a side-by-side shot of our template and its interior pieces. (11)

With our construction and detailing finished we can breathe some life into these stones be adding paint. Since we did not seal our insulation foam we do not want to use any kind of spray paint, as it will eat through the foam. It will have to be brushed on the old fashioned way. For terrain grabbing some craft paints from your local arts & crafts store work great. We want black for our base coat and a few greys, each lighter then the previous to complete our highlights. Give the stone a hearty coat of black. After this has dried we begin drybrushing a bit of grey over our black. We continue drybrushing over each previously dried coat with a lighter shade of grey until we come to a stone color we like. (12)



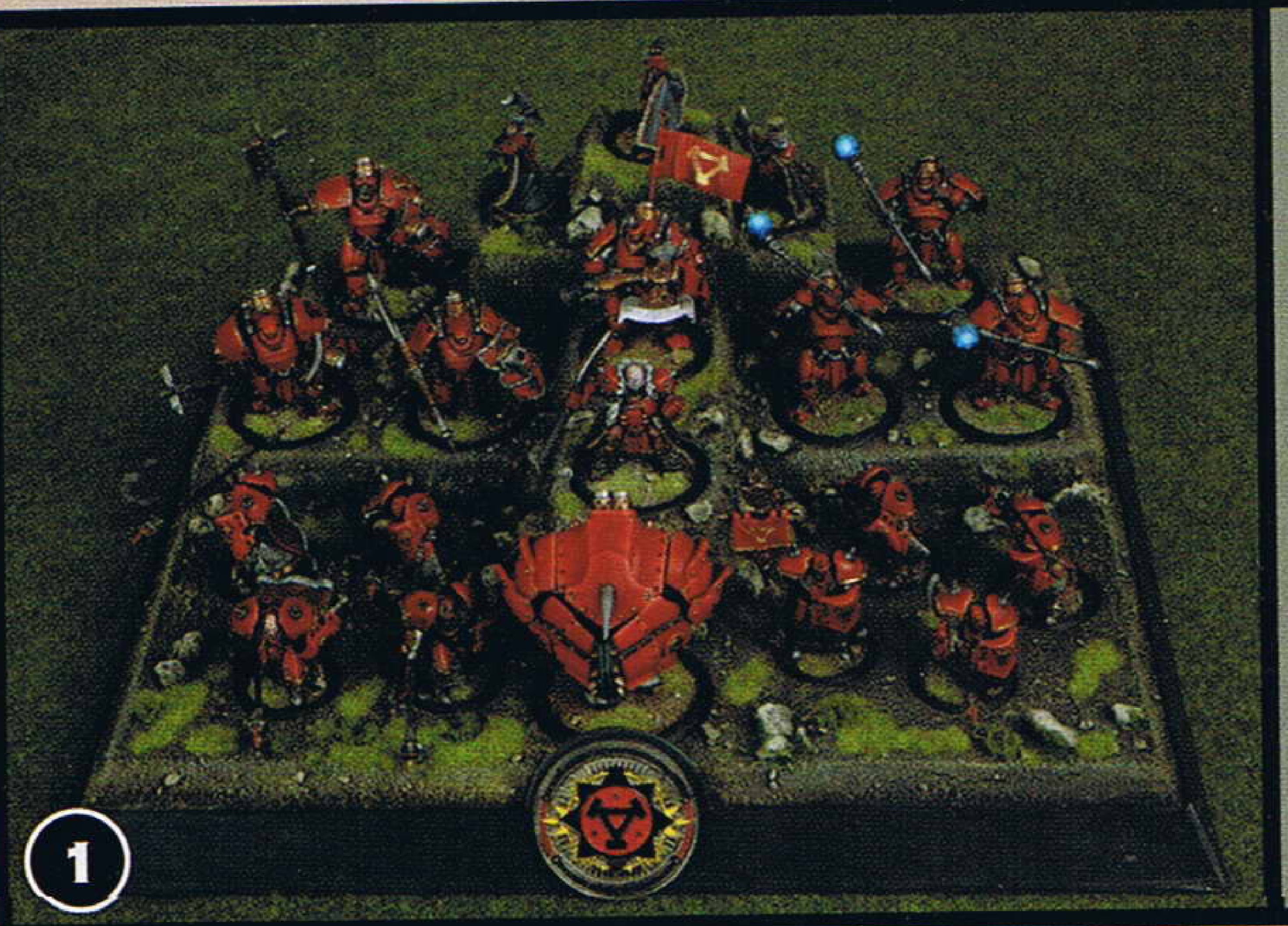


Now that we have the basic principals of creation down you can wander the wilds and create Standing Stones of various shapes and sizes. This can include the great krielstones used by the Trollbloods to immortalize their heroes, or altered versions of traditional Nyss winter stones used by Everblight's blighted Legion, or inscribed border markers set in the Marches by the Skorne to direct their soldiers in the invasion of the west. We have included a template and iconography to help you. Feel free to photocopy these designs and put them to good use. These are by no means the only possible designs; be creative. A set of standing stones with your unique army banner or icon would look awesome on the table.



BUILDING A SIMPLE SCENIC BASE

By Ron Kruzie with Rob Stoddard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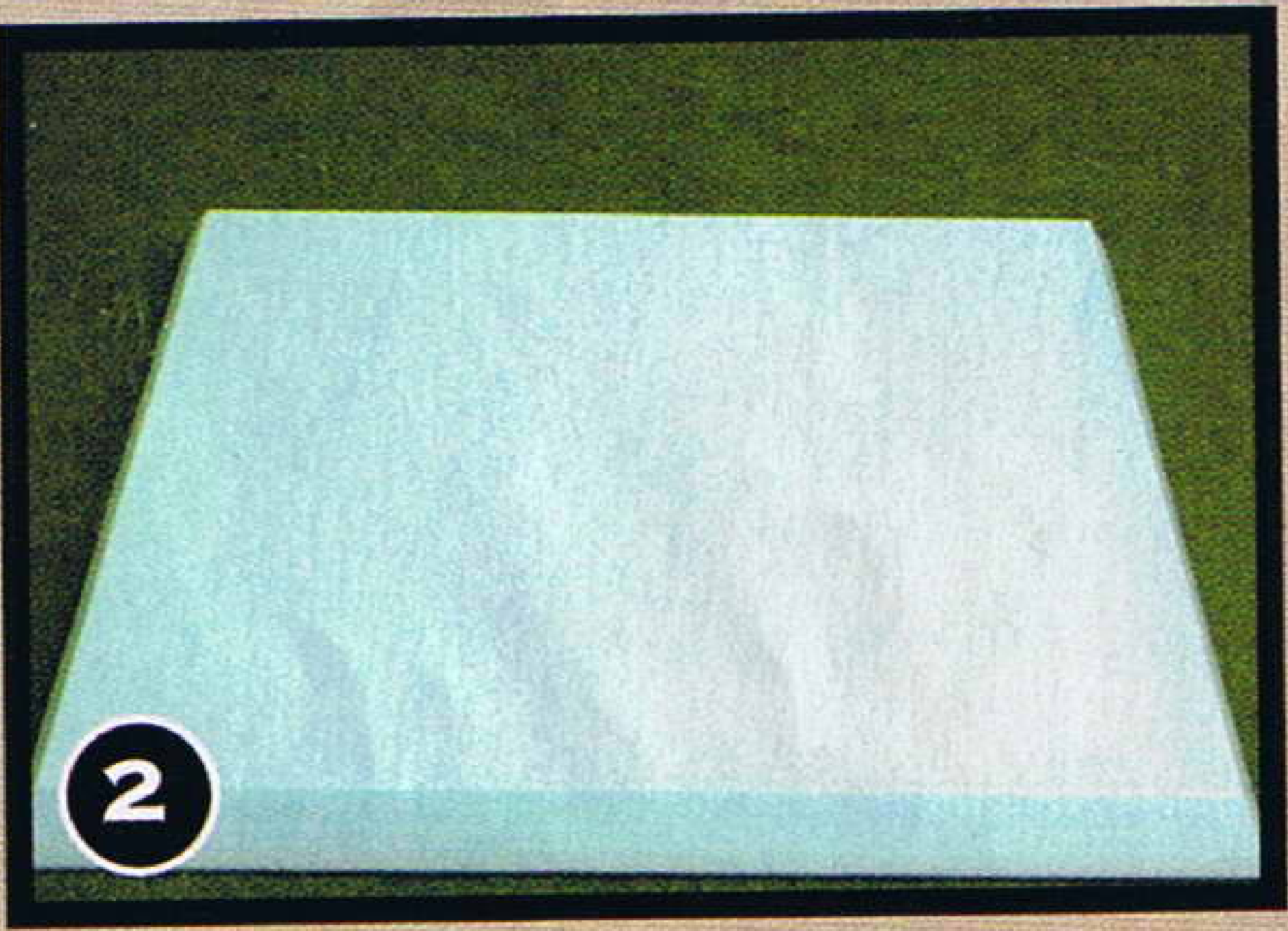
Choices have been made, the numbers run, minis painted, your opponents now lie before you destroyed & permanently scared. With medals of valor & honor issued your battlegroup must be presented for display to the king and populace.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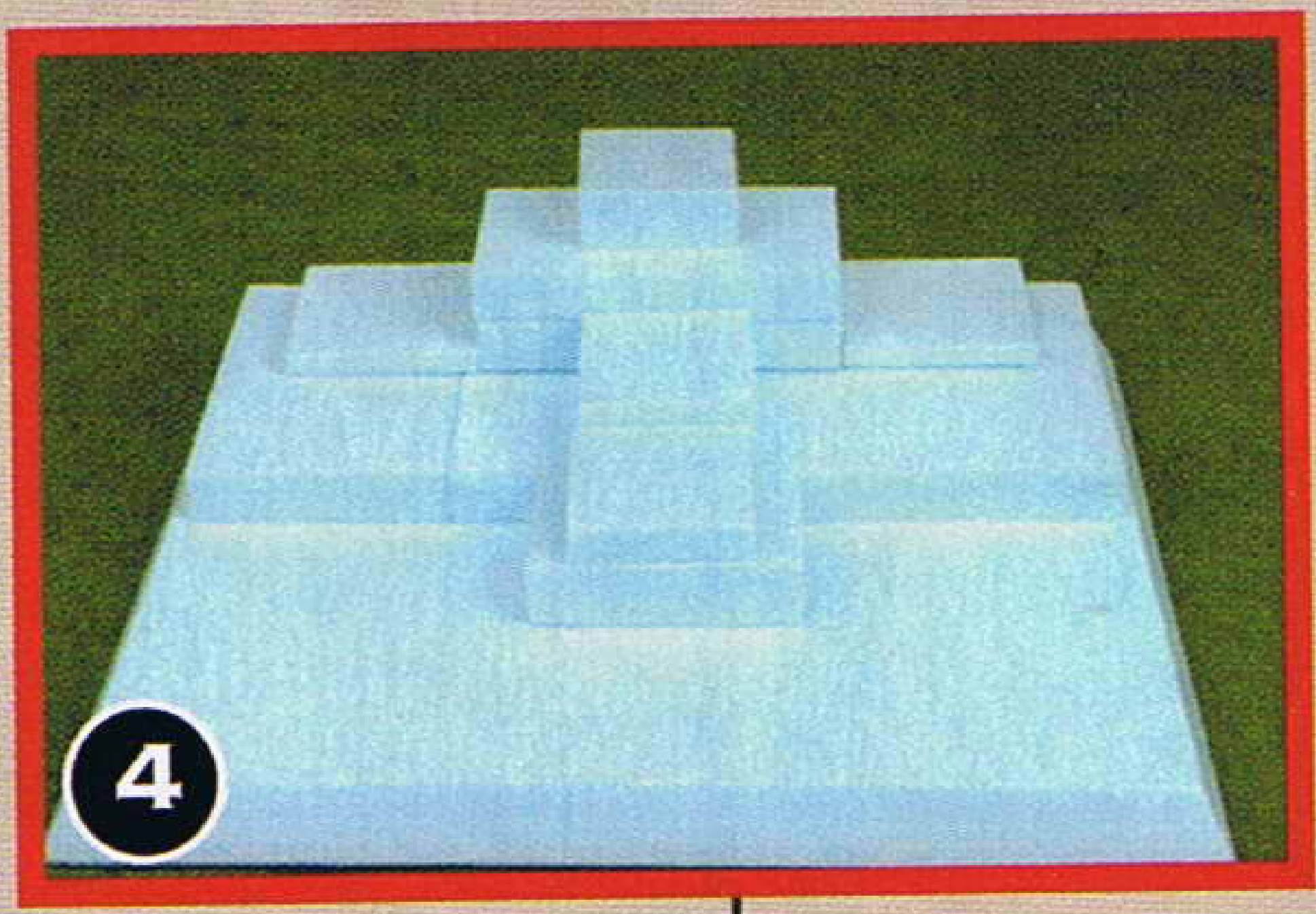
Revel in your new power and display your army with pride!

In this article we will teach you the ins and outs of building a fast, simple, multi-tiered display base for your 500 point army. This scenic base can double as your army transport during tournaments and game days. Along with giving you a morale boost, it may instill fear in your opponent.

First we will want an idea of how large our base will need to be to fit our entire force. After gathering up our 500 pt. army we lay out the models in varying formations—moving things around, playing with the placement and configuration of the models to see what provides the best possible look. One thing to keep in mind while arranging the models is elevation. We won't have all our models on the same level or many of them will be obscured or blocked when the army is displayed. The base we will be working on throughout this article will have a stadium seating feel. The highest elevation will be in the back for maximum exposure, with each subsequent level lower than the one behind.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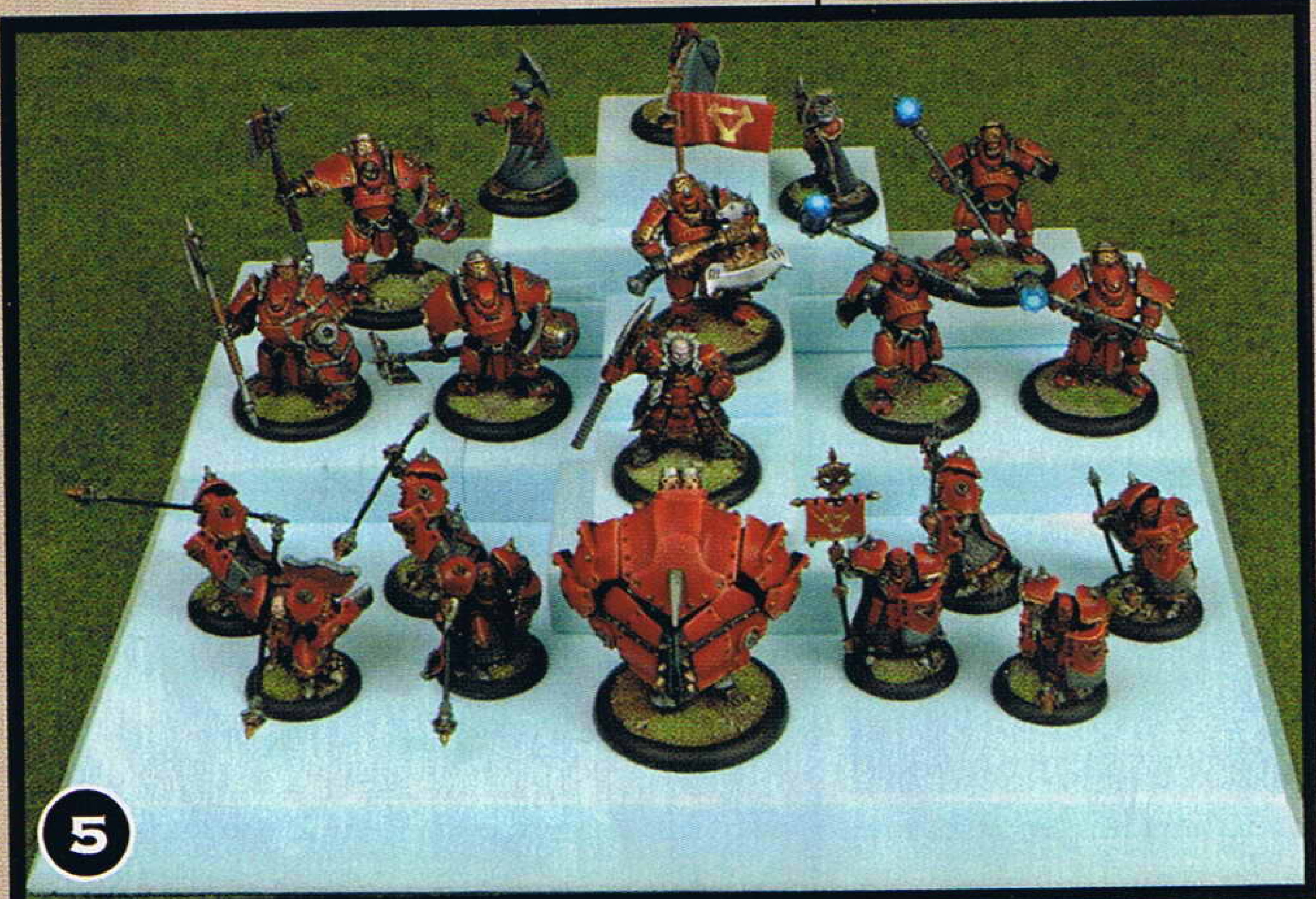
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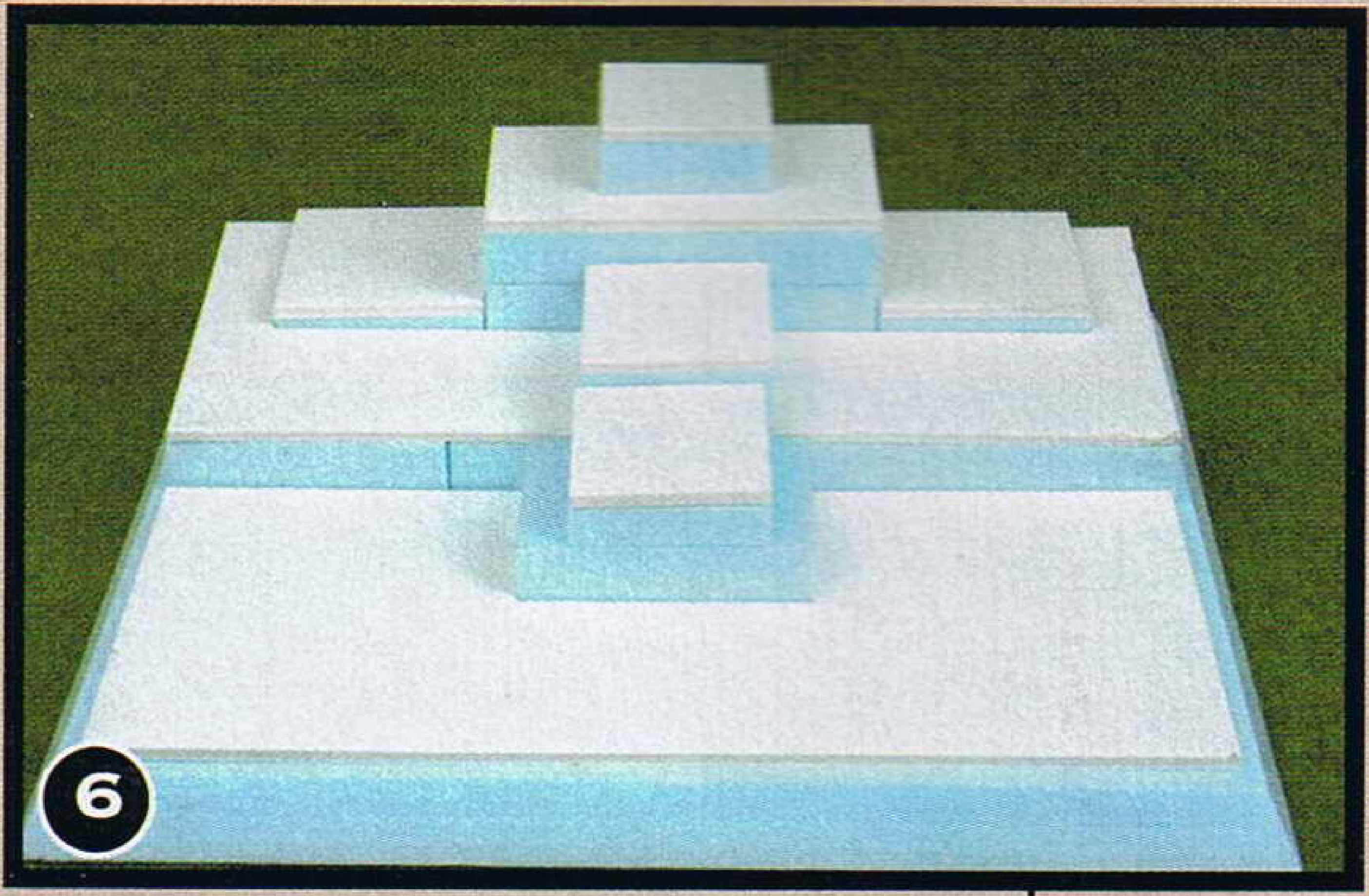
3

We will be utilizing many of the same materials used for normal terrain making. We want enough 1" thick insulation foam to complete our base level as well as all our elevations. We keep two sheets of foam board just in case some mishaps ensue. A nice sharp hobby knife is ideal and also a foam cutter, sometimes known as a hotwire. On top of all this we will want a pencil, plastic card, a bit of fine sandpaper, and some wood glue. We will also be using some sand and gravel normally used in basing models, a hot glue-gun and wood filler or joint compound.

After determining our base's initial size we want to cut a piece of insulation foam to the appropriate size. It is best to use a hotwire cutter or long bladed hobby knife for this process. (2) We double-check the size by placing our army on the base, keeping in mind that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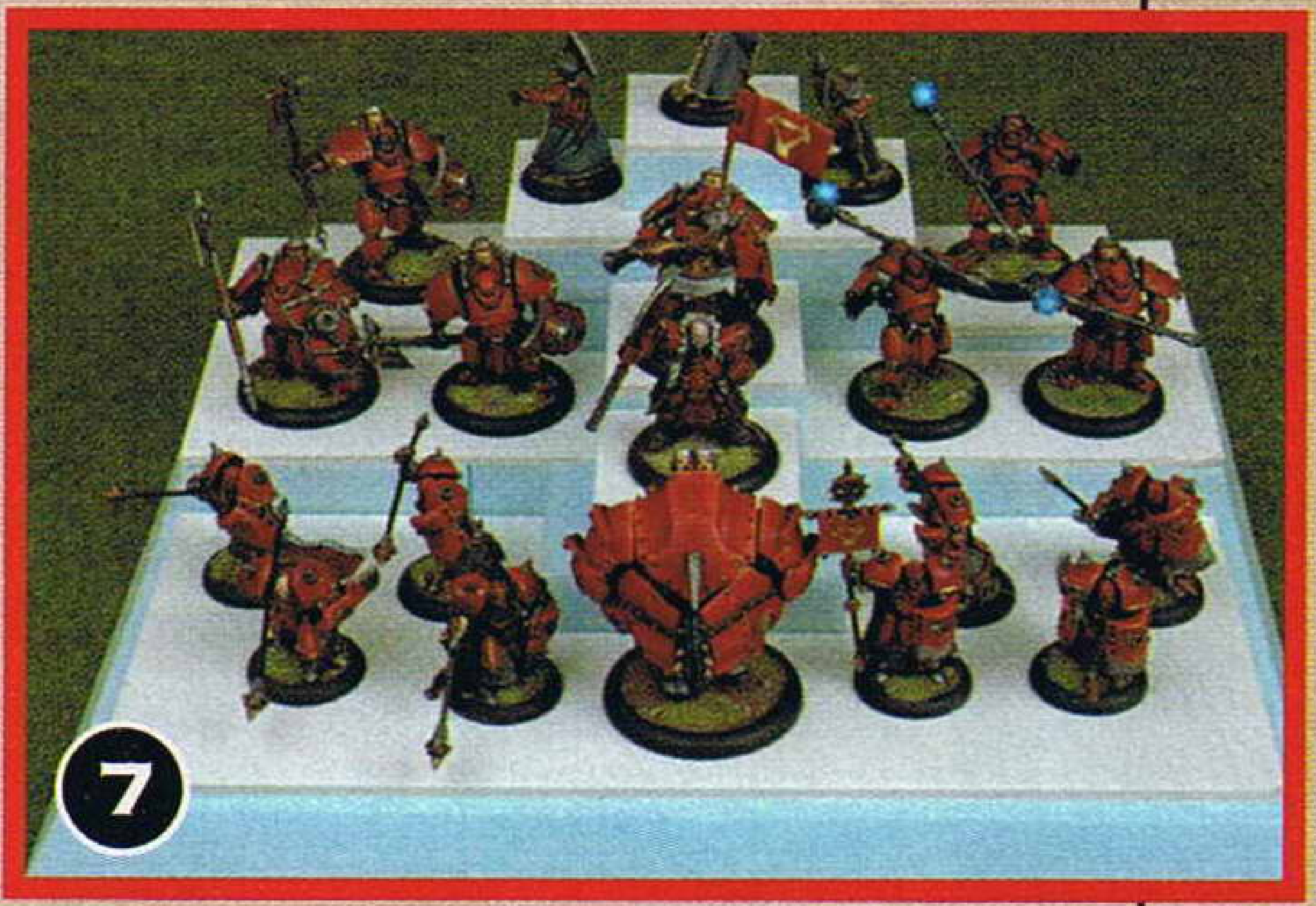
we will build up tiers so all the models have a chance to shine. (3) Next we want to cut out blocks to use for tiers. Try different placements and variations until you have found a combination that you like. It might help to place the models atop the tiers while doing this. (4)(5)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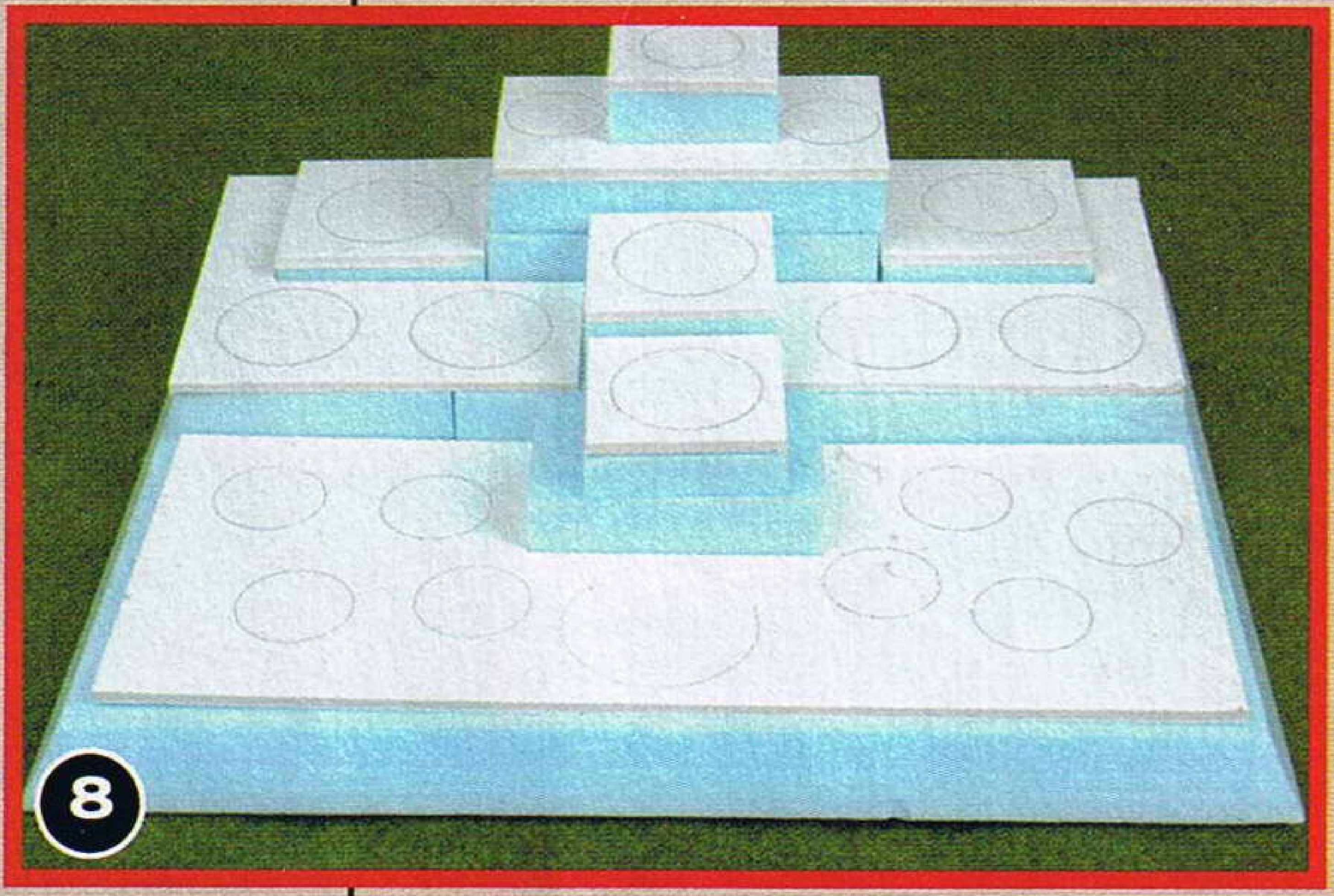
Before we get all crazy and glue down our tiers, we have a shortcut to help our bases sink into the display base. By making our army sink into the display base the models will be more secure for transporting. Using 5/32” think foam board that was found at an art store, we want to cut pieces to top off our insulation foam, including our tiers, it should look like this. (6) Without gluing anything in place, we build one final mock-up of our display, complete with our miniatures taking their appropriate places. (7) With a sharp pencil, we draw a circle around each model's base. These marks will ensure that we cut the correct spacing for each model. After removing the models from our templates we are ready to cut our foam board.(8)

We recommend a sharp hobby knife for the following step to help minimize any ripping or tearing, Brand new hobby knives/blades can be extremely sharp and should always handled with great care. We carefully cut out each circle in our foam board. Our models should slip perfectly into each slot creating an excellent overall look for our base and a good foundation for transporting our army from table to table. With our holes made, we recommend taking some extra bases and pushing them through each one to ensure the fit. Since we will be utilizing watered down putty later to seal and cover the foam, having a bit of extra space in each hole is acceptable.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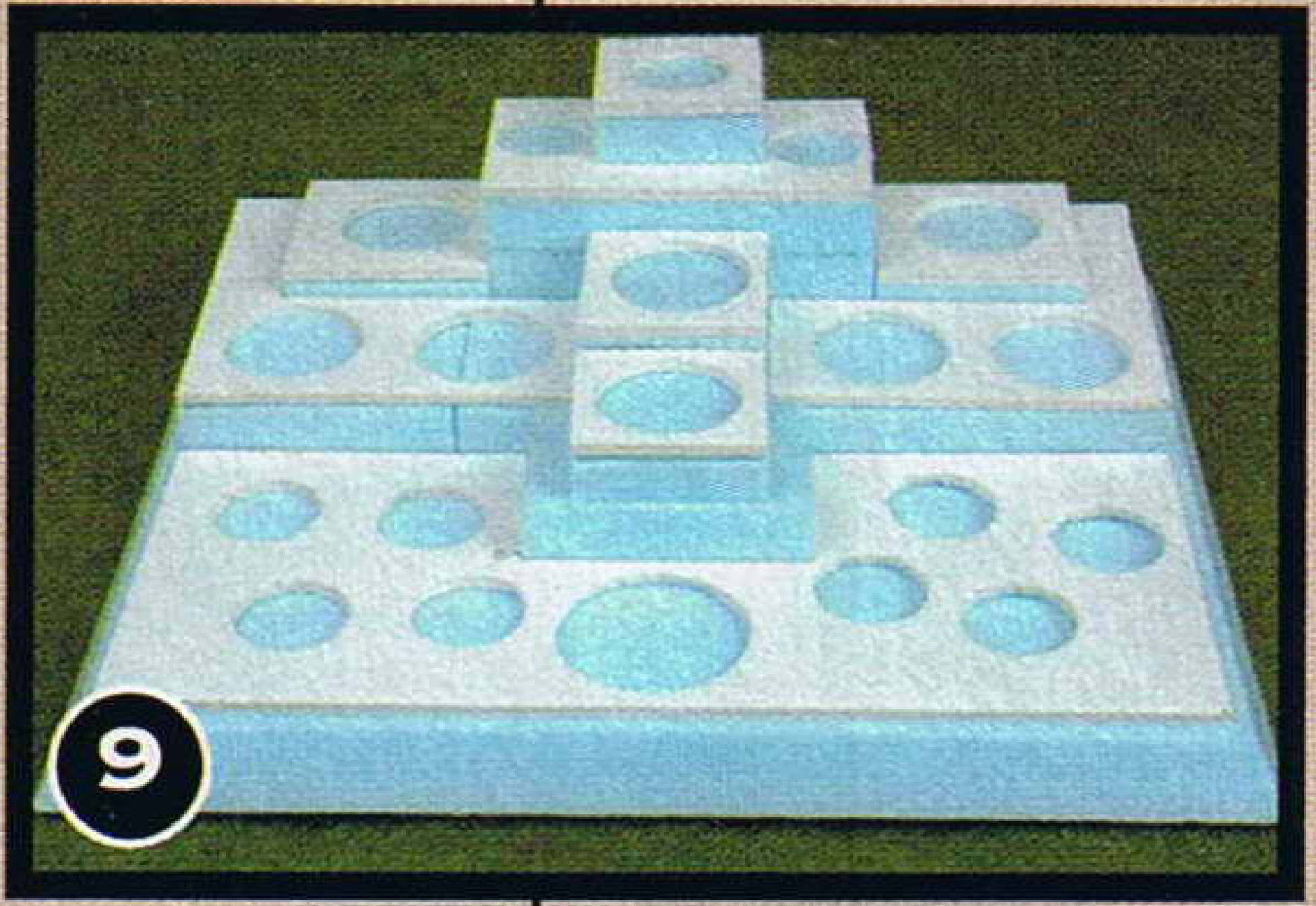
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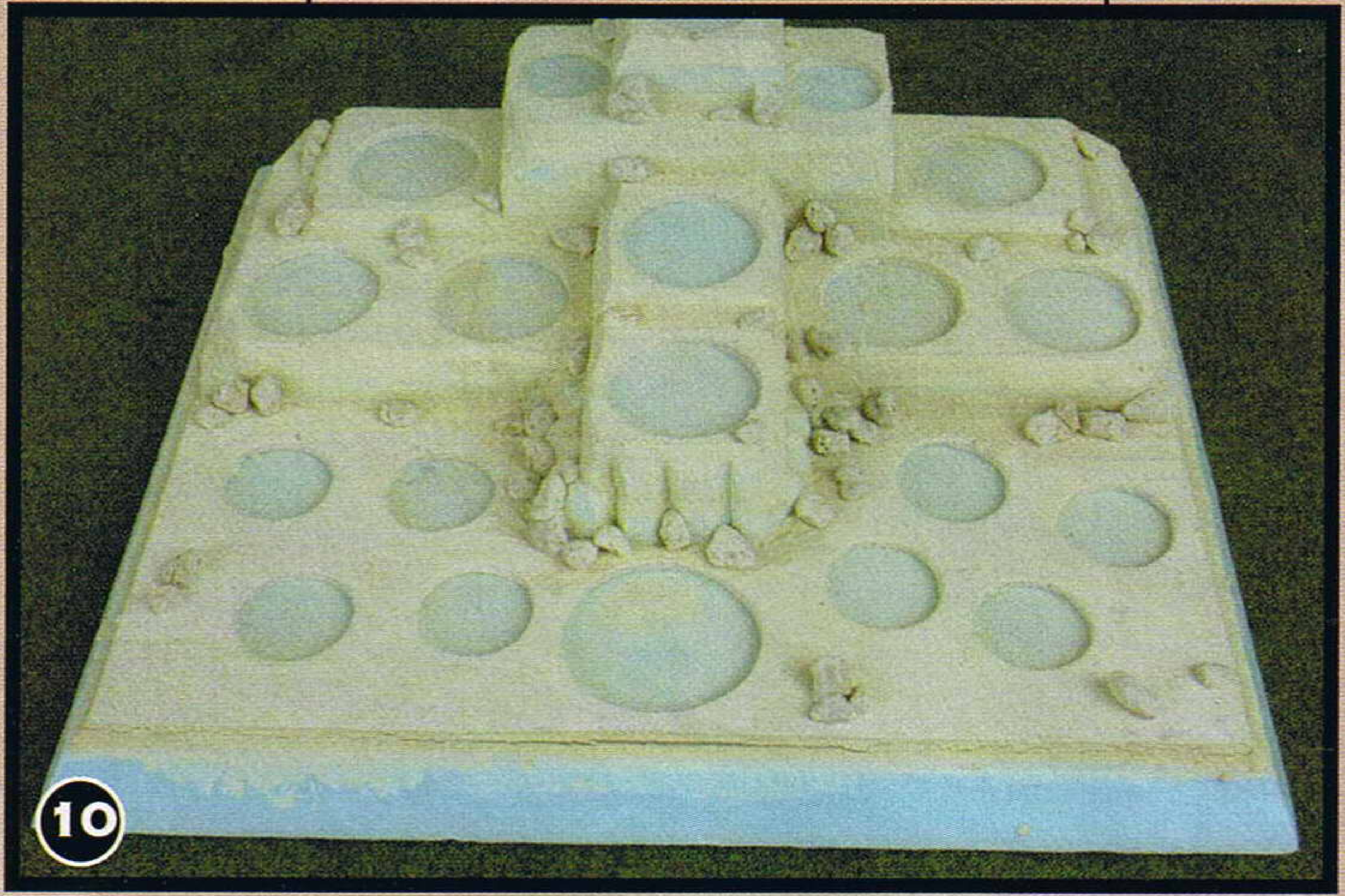
Next we grab some sandpaper and fine-tune the hole sizes, at the same time softening up the edges of our cutting job. Put the entire base together again and see how it looks. (9) Once we are happy with the fit we are ready to glue everything in place. Our base was glued together using a hot glue-gun for a fast drying strong bond. Hot glue works well for areas where there is not good air flow to help dry out other glues such as wood glue.

Next we need to add a bit of landscaping to our base. Using our glue-gun once again we put some rocks around the base. Then using wood filler or joint compound we want to fill in any cracks with a scrap piece of foam board and our fingers, these help bring the base together. Gaps in the finished base would break up the overall presentation and unity that we are trying to achieve. The next step is to add texture to the entire base quickly. Mix some wood filler and water in a spare cup. We are looking for a muddy paintable paste, once we have this we start splotting it on all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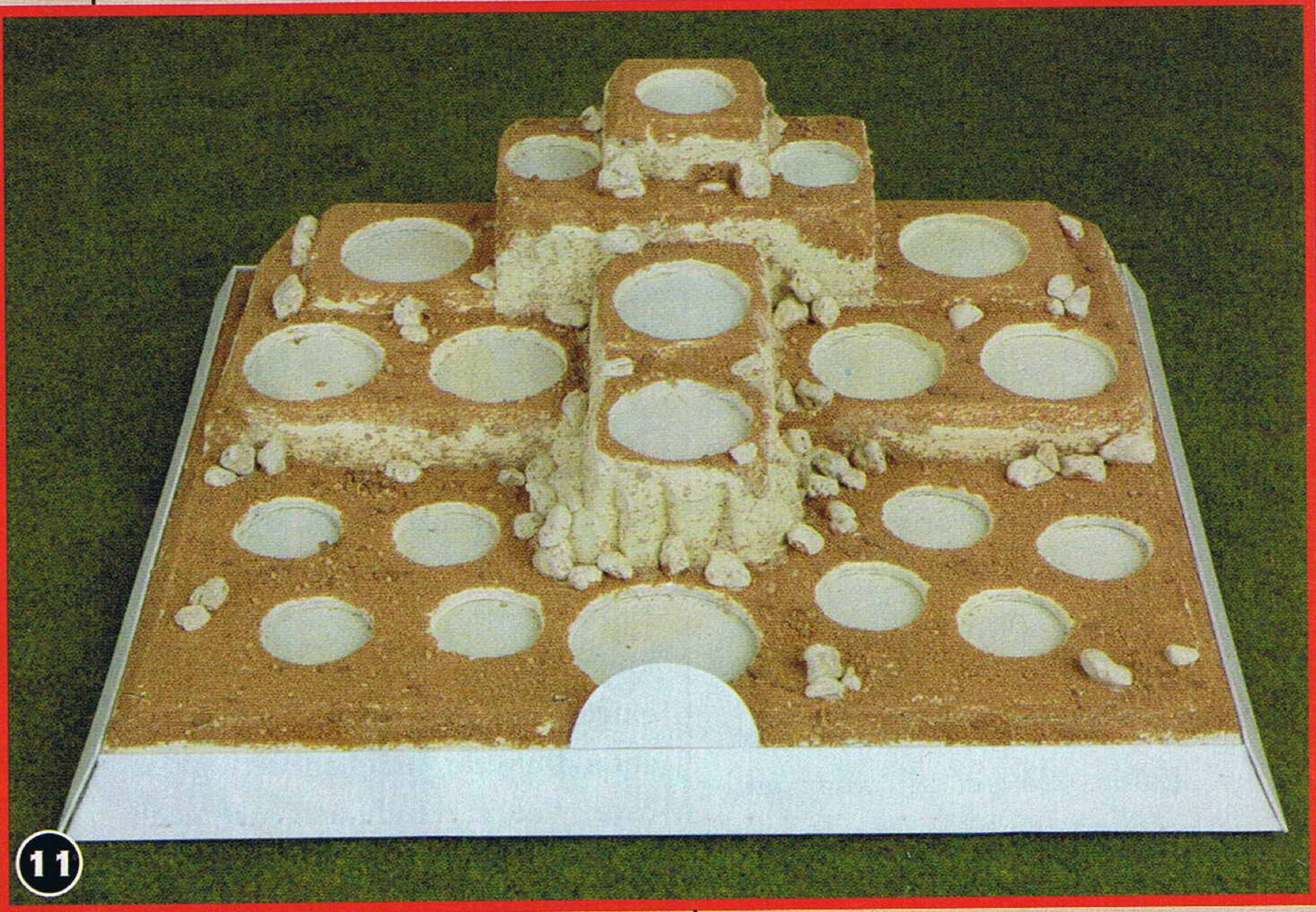
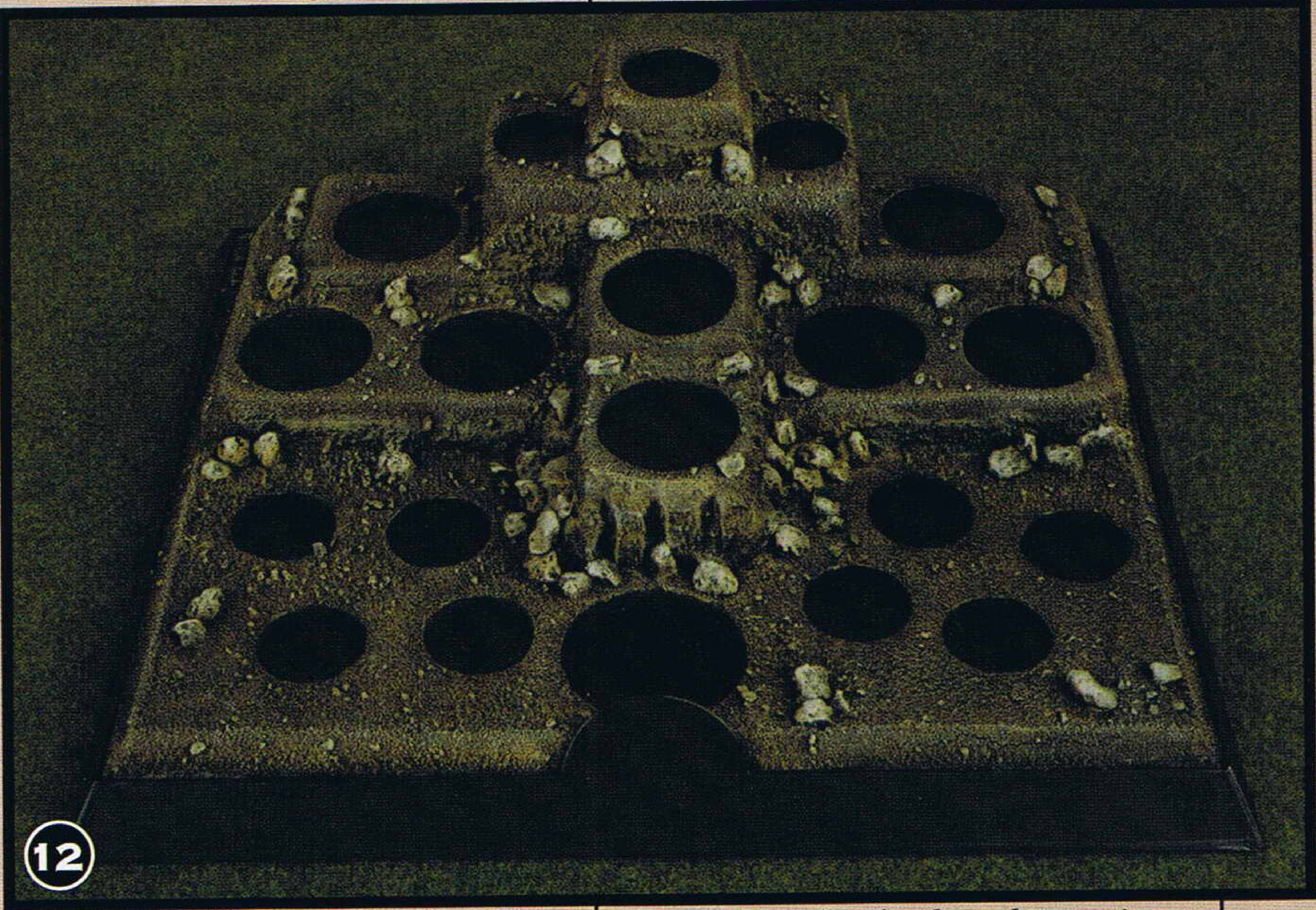
over the whole base. Splotting is a word, right? This will help protect the base from spray paint, and basic wear & tear, shielding the soft foam from damage. It will also give us a consistent overall texture. We want to make sure that this dries thoroughly, don't rush or we could be starting from scratch. Repeat this process if needed. Once everything is dry it should look something like this. (10)



11

The next step is to use our normal sand & gravel basing mixture to cover the base. Mix some wood glue and water in a cup until it turns into a thickness applicable by a brush. We want to apply the glue to each tier, one at a time. Be certain not to get any glue into the base cutouts or along the lower boarder of the base since this would ruin the flat surface we desire. With our glue down we sprinkle the sand & gravel mixture onto the base. Repeat these steps until the entire base is covered.



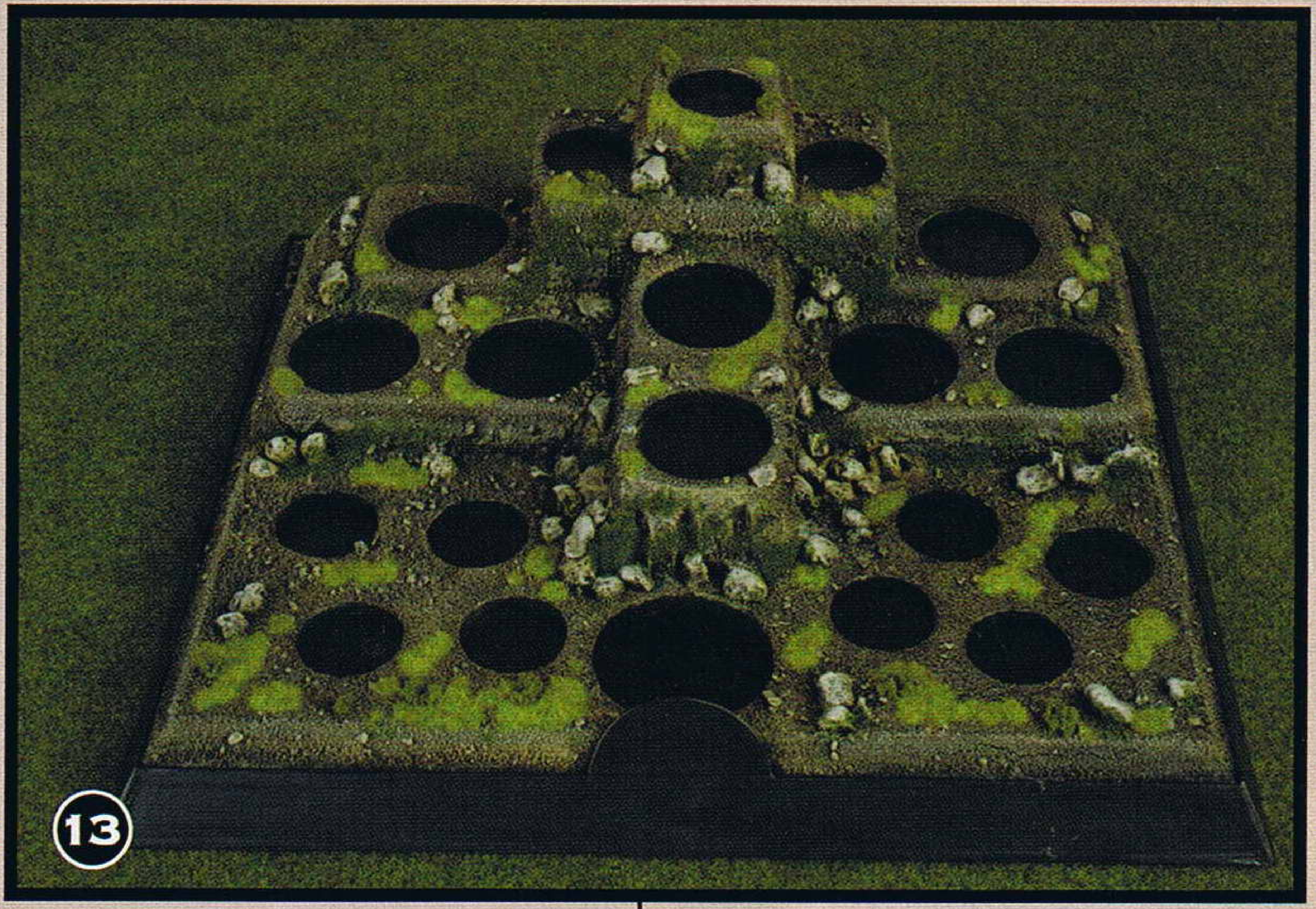
12

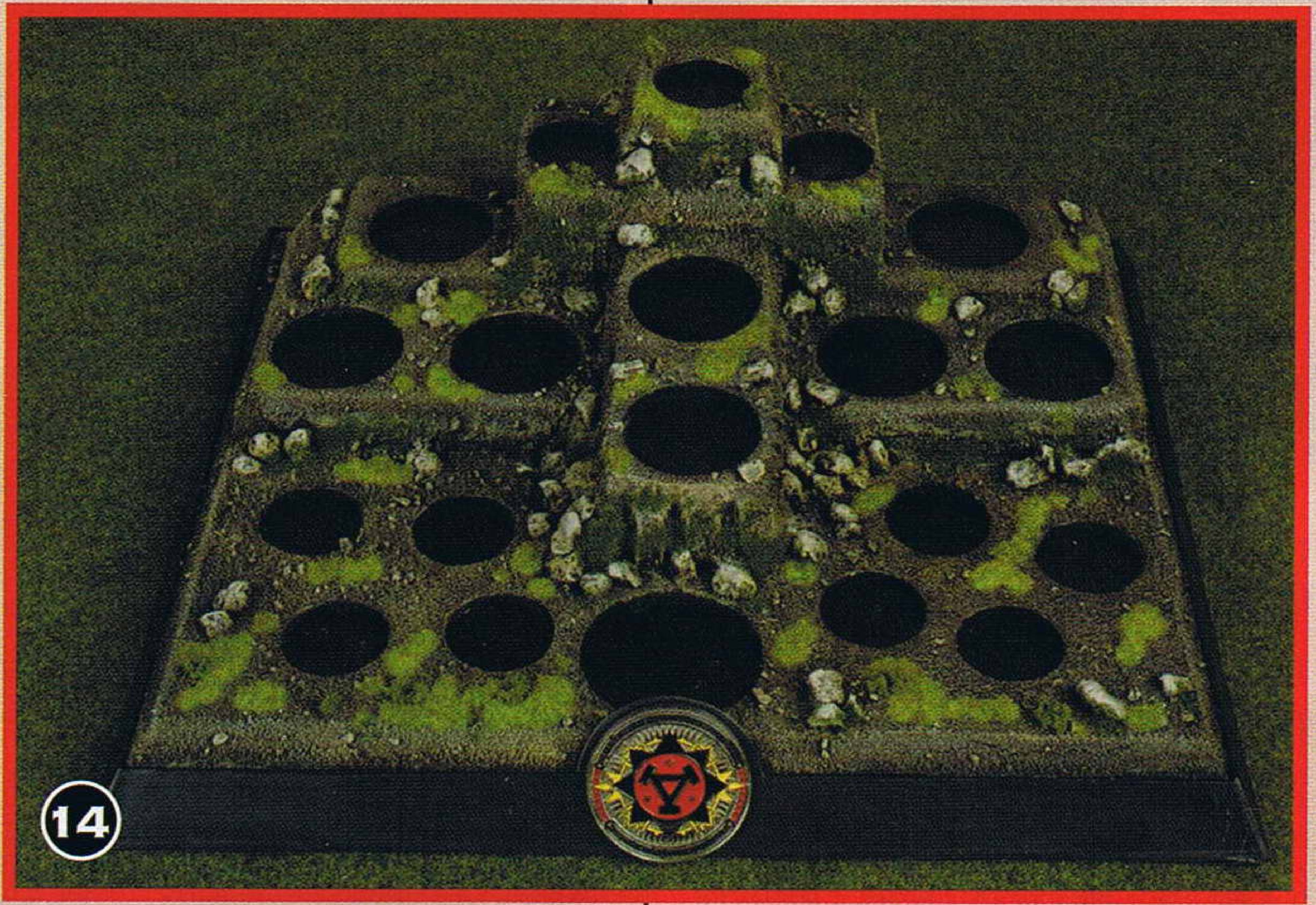
The only thing left to construct is a frame. We used plastic card, however car stock from a food package will work also. Cut a border all the way around the base and hot glue it to the insulation foam. Not only will this protect your display base, it covers any damage on the sides that may occur during construction. This border also makes for a smooth surface that we can utilize for further decorations and writing. (11) Before we start painting the base we make sure that all our models will fit into the holes that we've cut for them. This also gives a last minute chance to clean any overzealous wood filler and rock work.

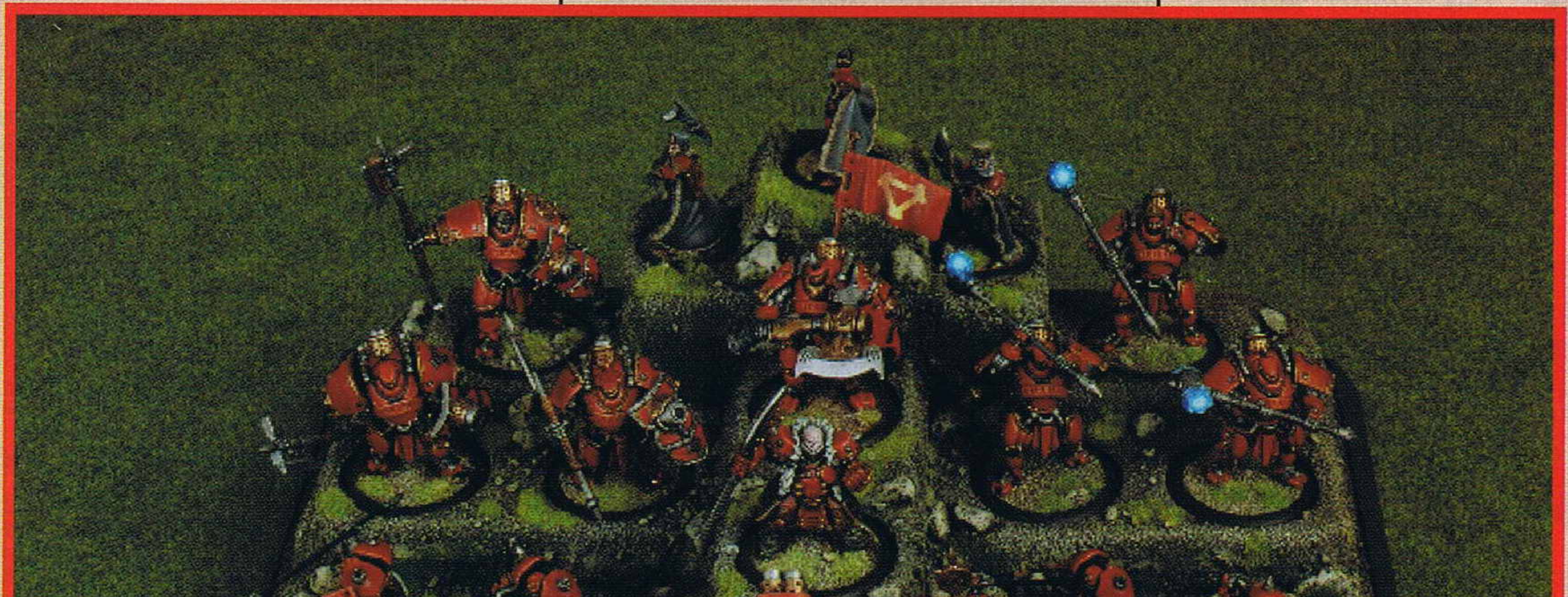
The construction finished, we are in the final stages. All we have left is painting and bringing our scenic base to life. We begin painting with a solid coat of Black spray paint—the foam would melt if we had not protected it with our watered down wood filler. Be sure to let the basecoat dry. We will match our scenic base to our model bases so we use all the same colors while we are drybrushing our scenic base. This particular base only has two colors drybrushed over the black: a medium brown followed by a bone color on top. Make sure each color is dry before starting on the next level of drybrushing. After we finish drybrushing the base we clean up the border with touches of black. (12)

You can have a lot of fun with a border such as this. You could script your army motto in runes, paint it dirty steel and have it riveted with bolts, or make it look as if it's on a stone ziggurat. Be creative and bring another personal touch that symbolizes your army to your scenic base. Now that we are finished with the painting we can add the scenics. Here we used the standard static grass, along with some blended turf. Splotch some slightly thinned wood glue onto the base and sprinkle the scenics on. Tap the bottom of the base to shift and help settle the static grass into place. (13)

Our final touch for this base is our medal that was awarded for battlefield excellence. Mount the medal with hot glue or some bluetak if you would like it removable.(14) With this basic scenic base created you have the general understanding of how it all came together. Now you can move onto more advanced base projects like snow fields, forests, city streets, let your imagination run wild. Now lets get some scenic bases built and show them off. Be proud of the effort and the results, others will admire the work. Lets see those armies on display, in all their glory!

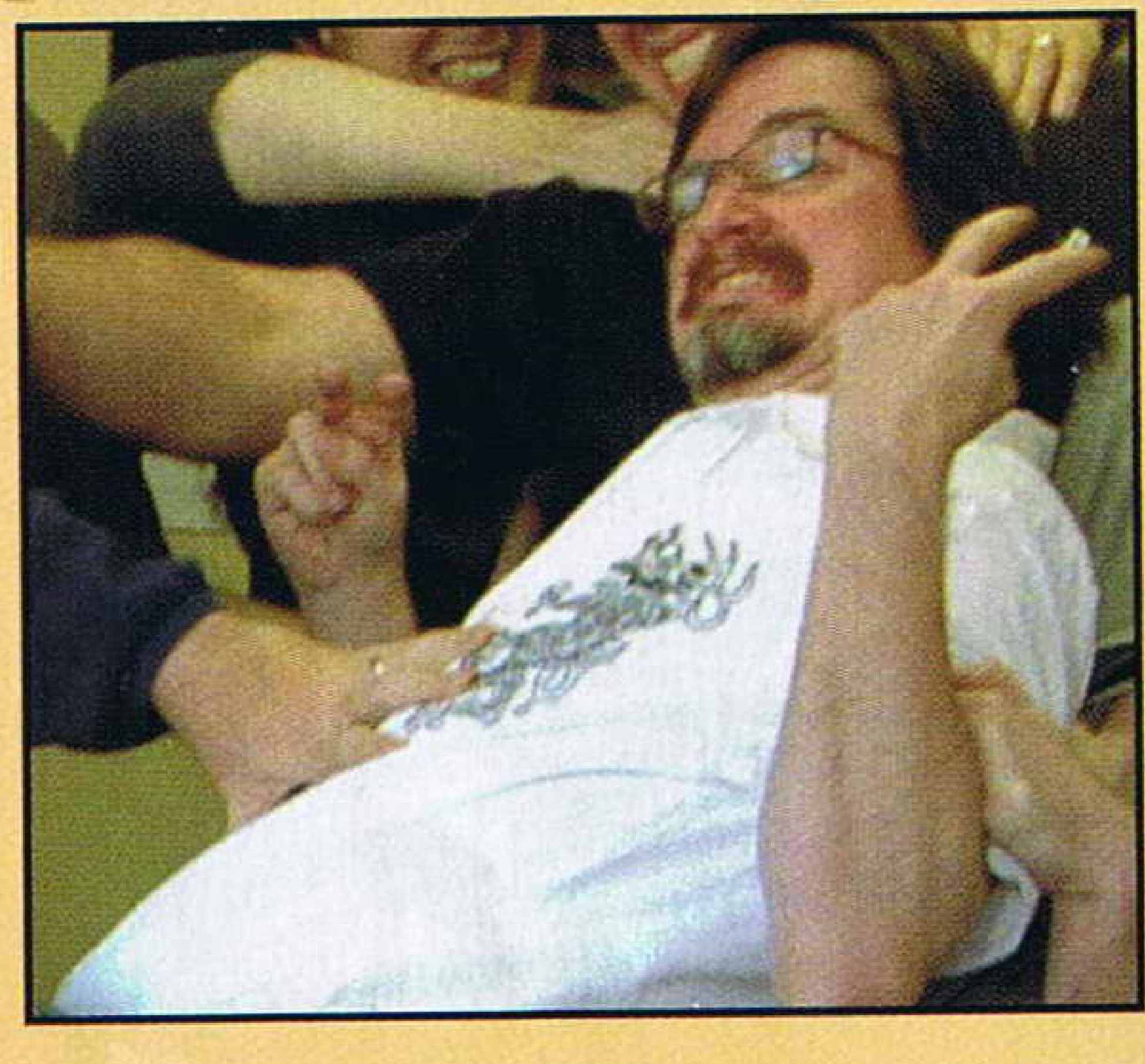






HALEY-TOE TO TOE

BY DUNCAN HUFFMAN



"Are you out of you mind man? Where the hell are your GUNS?" I hear this or some variant of the comment almost ever time I play this list. Some folks have never seen (or even heard of) a close combat Cygnar list using Haley. No long gunners. No trenchers. No Adepts. Haley's Hand Cannon is the only ranged weapon in the list, and it is just an extra, no real need for it.

After a few times clobbering folks with this around here, they suggested that I share the tactics with you so that everyone will understand that there is more than one way to use Cygnar's favorite girl.

I've played several versions of this, some without the Stormsmiths, some swapping the Centurion for an Ironclad. I even run one with three Lancers and The Piper of Ord. Any way you cut it, the tactics are elegant and simple; use your spell support and speed advantage to get those Lancers and Sword Knights to key targets early. Drive them like wedges through his lines and keep the big fella back for mid-game and counter charges. Running a list like this at a flank is one of my favorite things in WARMACHINE.

First off, let's talk about Haley. The common wisdom has Haley players taking as many guns as they can, casting Temporal Barrier as often as possible, and letting the opponent come to them while shooting the snot out of him. That certainly works, but is by no means the only way to go.

This list uses her in exactly the opposite fashion. Temporal Barrier is only used to drop the DEF of models once engaged and only rarely to prevent charges. You want to get them close to you. The funny look on his face when you start running her troops right at his Warcaster makes it all worth it.

Haley's spell casting job here is twofold. First, Chain Lightning. This one is easy. See those troops? Fry them. Her 14 inch control area and the two Lancers ensure that you can put this where ever you need it most. Don't be afraid to zap your own 'jacks to hit higher DEF enemies.

Secondly, Scramble. Pound for pound, one of the best anti-'jack spells in the game. For three focus I can effectively remove around 20% (if the target is a heavy warjack) of his force from the equation for a turn. I'll take two please. The good news is that you can cast it twice if you have two 'jacks breathing down your neck. Worried about the Deathjack? Behemoth has you in a tizzy? Take two Scramble and call Nemo in the morning.

The rest of her spell list can be used as needed (Deadeye is not used much with this composition, but the rest are very handy), but

HALEY CYGNAR ARMY

CAPTAIN VICTORIA HALEY	58
SWORD KNIGHTS + 2 TROOPERS	74
SWORD KNIGHTS + 1 TROOPER	65
STORMSMITH	12
STORMSMITH	12
STORMSMITH	12
LANCER	76
LANCER	76
CENTURION	113

TOTAL 498

Up close and personal with Haley and the Boys...

remember, Temporal Barrier should only be used to make sure the other goodies you have hit what they swing at. Keeping the enemy at bay does your melee troops no good whatsoever.

The key to getting all these wonderful arcane party favors to work for you are the humble Lancers. These little beauties are tough enough to take a beating, fast enough to get out to the edge of Haley's control quickly, and with the Arc Nodes you can cram a Scramble or Chain Lightning down your opponents cheese pipe from an effective 24 inch range. Add to that the reach of the spear and the cortex busting Shock Shield and you can see why I sometimes take three of these in a melee list.

The Centurion's job in this line-up is to screen Haley and get counter charges off on things that get hung up on the knights and the Lancers. His shield stops him from being slammed into his boss and his reach makes him fantastic support for the Knights. On occasion I'll put him up front to prevent the charge and then counter with the troops and light 'jacks. He's big, tough as nails, and flexible for all sorts of tactics. Hard not to like him in this list.

The Knights are the plate-mailed backbone of this party and they come with a whole bag of hurt all their own. First, Defensive Line's +2 ARM gets them to the target. Coupled with Haley's Arcane Shield they weigh in at a whopping ARM 19; more than enough to walk away from blast damage.

The real draw of these fellas and the reason all of the warjacks have spears, is Flank. This gives the Knights a bonus on attack rolls and an extra damage die if a 'jack is engaging their target.

The Knight's SPD 6 means you can get the drop on what you want to erase. Since they get an extra attack due to the Swordmaster ability, erase it you will. I take a pair of units rather than one big one to make certain that I can adapt as needed on the fly. This list excels at redeployment and unpredictability.

The Stormsmiths are more than just gravy. They are on the field to handle any swarm problems that sneak by the Chain Lightning or disrupt any 'jacks that manage to not be Scrambled. I've had the most success with these guys by holding them back and then running (SPD 6 again!) a pair up opposite flanks once everything is engaged. This gives you a nice mid to late-game triangulation that can really turn the tide in your favor.

Key Tips:

• Get stuck in! Drive the bulk of your force at a key target and don't sweat the small stuff.

• Lead with your Lancers and use your spells to change your opponent's battle plan.

• Flank is your friend. Your 'jacks have reach to maximize this.

• Temporal Barrier in this list is best used to help your melee troops hit. Don't worry about slowing your enemy.

• Mop up with the Stormsmiths. Don't try to get them deployed too early.

• Use your speed and adapt as needed. You have the tools to threaten him in many different ways – use them all.

"I'm not sure who he is sir, but I know this; they want him bad enough to tromp all the way out to this forsaken hole. Hopefully they'll tear each other apart before they even get to us..."
- Sgt. Zephram Phillips to Colonel D. W. Vanentine, Commander of Fort Lawton

~ MULTIPLAYER WARMACHINE~

THE SIEGE ON FORT LAWTON

By Duncan Huffman and Jason Soles

While we all love to throw down one on one, multiplayer WARMACHINE is a facet to the game that some players may not have had a chance to explore.

Multiplayer, free-for-all games (as opposed to team games) bring a frantic pace and threats from all sides. They can be a tactically supercharged, paranoid, slug-match; where even the simplest battlefield tactics can have unexpected and spectacular results.

Playing a game of WARMACHINE versus more than one opponent can also be a great way to broaden your horizons and give you a fresh perspective on the game. It can be just the thing to top off a league night, learn unexpected combos and tactics, or even find out who the "king of the hill" really is.

The rules for multiplayer games have always existed (see WARMACHINE:Prime, pages 30-31), but many scenarios are not designed with multiple players in mind, so two player games often take the spotlight. In addition, multiplayer pick-up games take a little more up-front planning than usual.

If you've never experienced multiplayer WARMACHINE before – have no fear. What follows are a few basic tips for making multiplayer pickup games a blast, followed by a brand new scenario for three or four players; so you can get right to the fighting.

3 TIPS FOR A GREAT MULTIPLAYER GAME

1) Expect to get ganged up on.

There are no friendlies on the table, but that does not mean that your opponents won't delay hostilities just to clobber you first. Plan for it. Use table position and the strong pointy bits of your army to make the other guy a more attractive target.

Don't hesitate to blast the face off of an "ally" who may not expect it either. The fact that your opponent is not shooting you does not make him your friend. Go for the throat if you get the chance. He would. It's all part of the fun.

2) Deployment

When setting up a simple three or four player game with no scenario, watch your deployment zones. Make certain that all players have equal distance to the others and are not blocked by terrain. It does not have to be perfect (this is war after all... and if you agree to un-balanced zones – go for it) but some simple planning ahead can keep the victor from being a forgone conclusion.

3) Timing

No doubt about it, more players means more time. A quick bit of math tells us that unless you manage time, multiplayer games can drag on into the wee hours. At 500 points each in a four player match, a player will only get one turn every 45 minutes if everyone takes 15 minutes per turn. A five round game would last at least five hours – ridiculously long for an aggressive game like WARMACHINE.

We recommend setting a turn limit for each player to avoid never-ending games. A cheap egg timer, or even a simple pocket watch can be used to let the player know when his turn is over.

In the following scenario we use five-minute rounds, although any agreed upon limit will work. Find a time that works for you.

So there you have it. Following these guidelines should help you get the most out of your multiplayer games. The "Assault on Fort Lawton" scenario below is designed to give you an example of how this all comes together. So grab a group, an open table, your army, and be prepared for anything...

MULTIPLAYER WARMACHINE

DESCRIPTION

In an undermanned outpost on the border of the kingdom, the unthinkable has occurred. Having recently captured what they believed to be a spy, the garrison has found themselves surrounded and outnumbered by at least three forces and from all directions. Something about this prisoner has attracted the attention of enemies not usualy seen in the region.

Word has been sent for reinforcements. With hastily rebuilt barriers and scavenged gun emplacements it is up to the garrison to hold out until help can arrive.

SPECIAL RULES

The Siege on Fort Lawton is designed to be played on a 48" x 48" table.

Multiplayer Game – The Siege on Fort Lawton is a multiplayer game suitable for three or four players. One player takes on the role of the defender, setting up his forces within the fort. The other players take on the role of attackers besieging the fort. Attackers are not on a team. The models of one attacking player are the enemies of another.

Before creating their armies, each player rolls a d6. The highest rolling player chooses to be the defender or an attacker. If he does not chose to be the defender, the choice passes on to the second highest rolling player, and so until a player decided to play the defender or the role of the defender passes on to the lowest rolling player.

The defender creates a 750 points army. Each attacker may spend up to 500 points.

Timed Turns – Time is of the essence! Players are limited to five minutes turns. If a player is in the middle of a model/units activation when time is called, he may complete the activation before the next player begins his turn.

SET-UP

Wall Sections – The defender places up to four (4) Wall Sections within 8" of the center of the table. Wall sections must be less than 1" high and may be up to 5" long. A Wall Section cannot be placed within 3" of another Wall Section.

Gun Emplacements – The defender may then place up to four (4) Gun Emplacements within 8" of the center of the table. Gun Emplacements are 40mm in diameter, the same size as a medium base, and stand 1" tall. Gun Emplacements cannot be placed within 3" of another terrain feature.

Gun Emplacements have ARM 16 and can take 10 damage points before being destroyed.

A warrior model in base contact with a Gun Emplacement may make a special action to make a ranged attack with the fixed-mounted pivot gun. A gun cannot be fired if an enemy model is also in base contact with the Gun Emplacement. Ignore the Gun Emplacement itself when determining LOS. Pivot guns are RNG 14 and POW 14.

Additional Terrain – The defender then places up to three (3) additional terrain features anywhere on the table. Terrain features should be no larger than 6" across and cannot be placed with 6" of another terrain feature or table edge.

Finally, attackers take turns each placing two (2) terrain features anywhere at least 10" from the center of the table. Terrain features should be no larger than 6" across and cannot be placed with 5" of another terrain feature or table edge.

Attacker Elimination – When an attacker loses his warcaster, his remaining models are removed from the table. Wreck markers remain in play.

BEGINNING

The Defender deploys his forces first, placing his models within 6" of the center of the table. The defender takes the first turn.

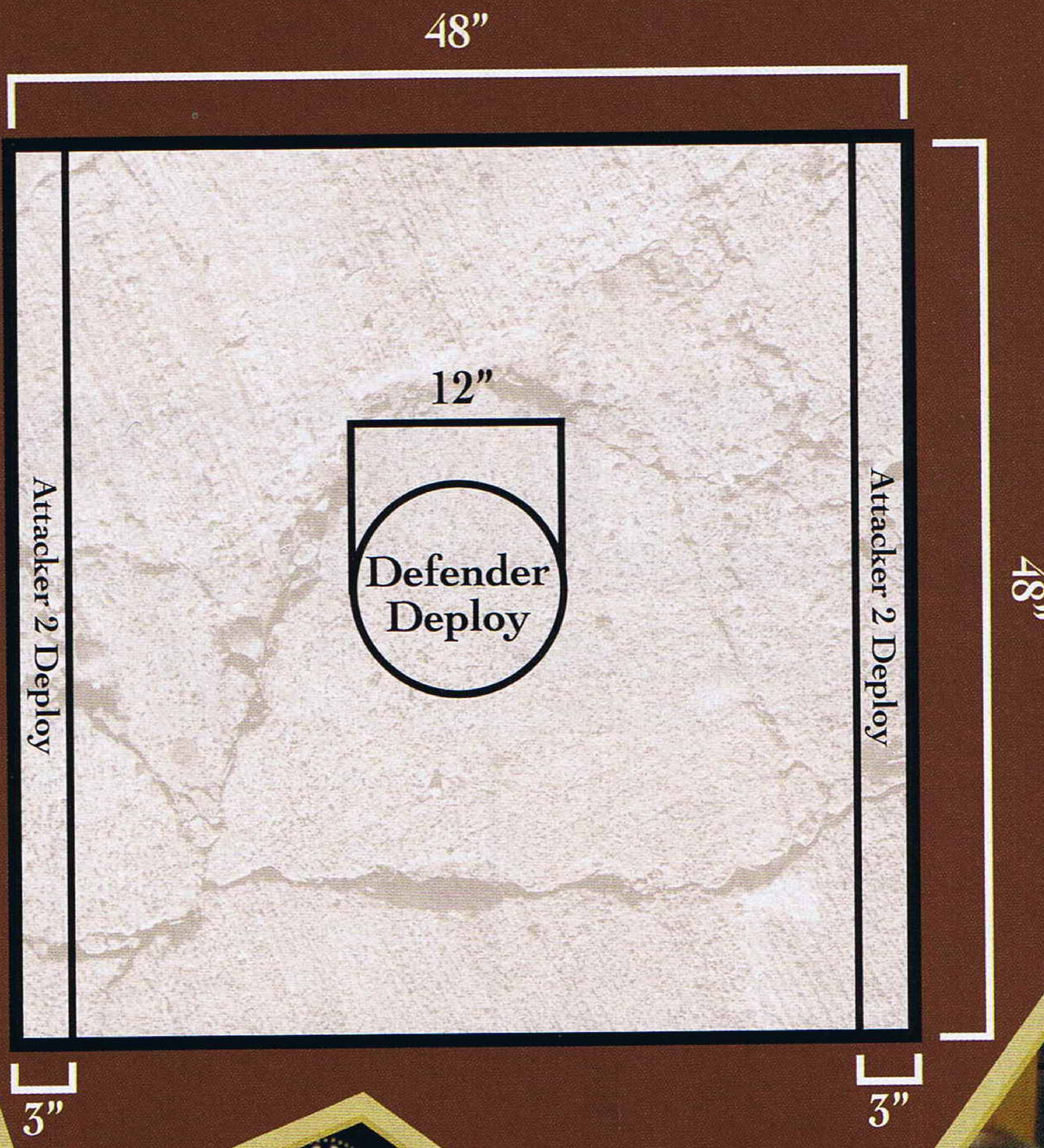
Each attacker then rolls a d6. The attacker who rolls the highest chooses to go first or last. The player who rolls second highest then chooses to go first or last among the remaining spots in play order. The lowest rolling attacker then takes the remaining spot in play order. The first attacker gets his choice of deployment zones, sets up first, and takes the first turn after the defender. Deployment zones are determined by map based on the number of players participating in the scenario.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

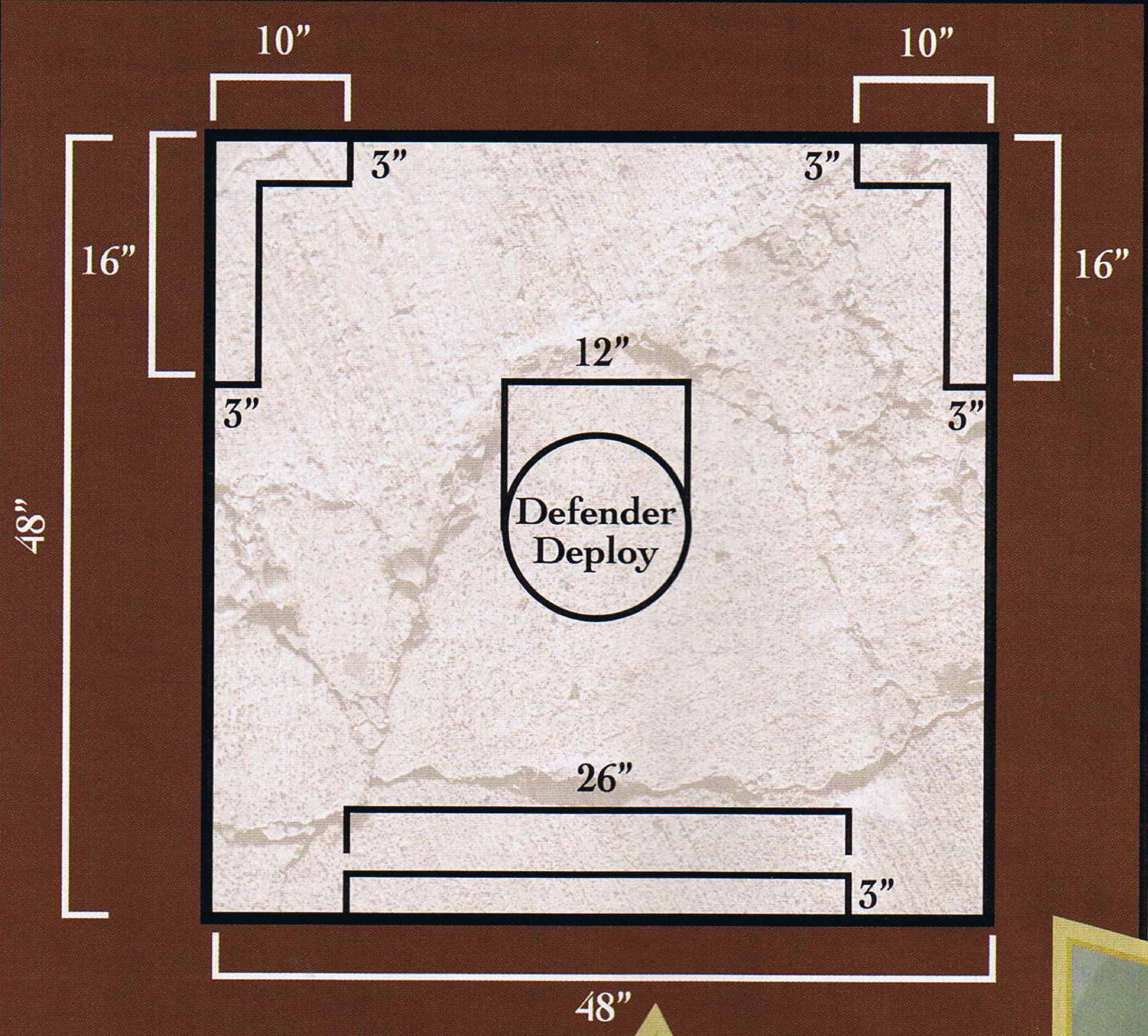
The Defender wins if his warcaster has not been destroyed or removed from play after five (5) rounds.

The Attacker who destroys or removes the Defender's warcaster from play wins the game.

3 PLAYER MAP



4 PLAYER MAP


10"
10"
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Defender Deploy
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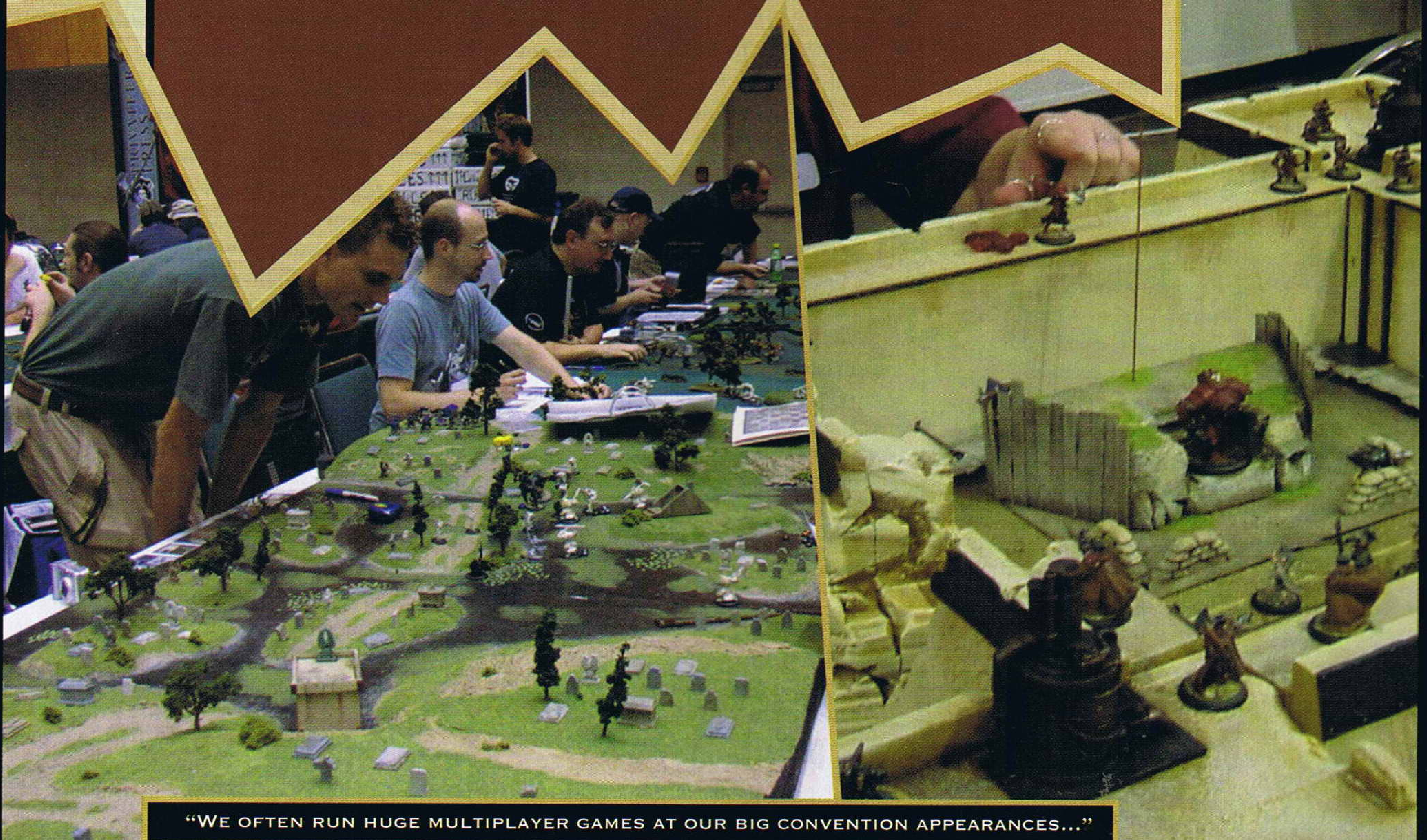

"We often run huge multiplayer games at our big convention appearances..."

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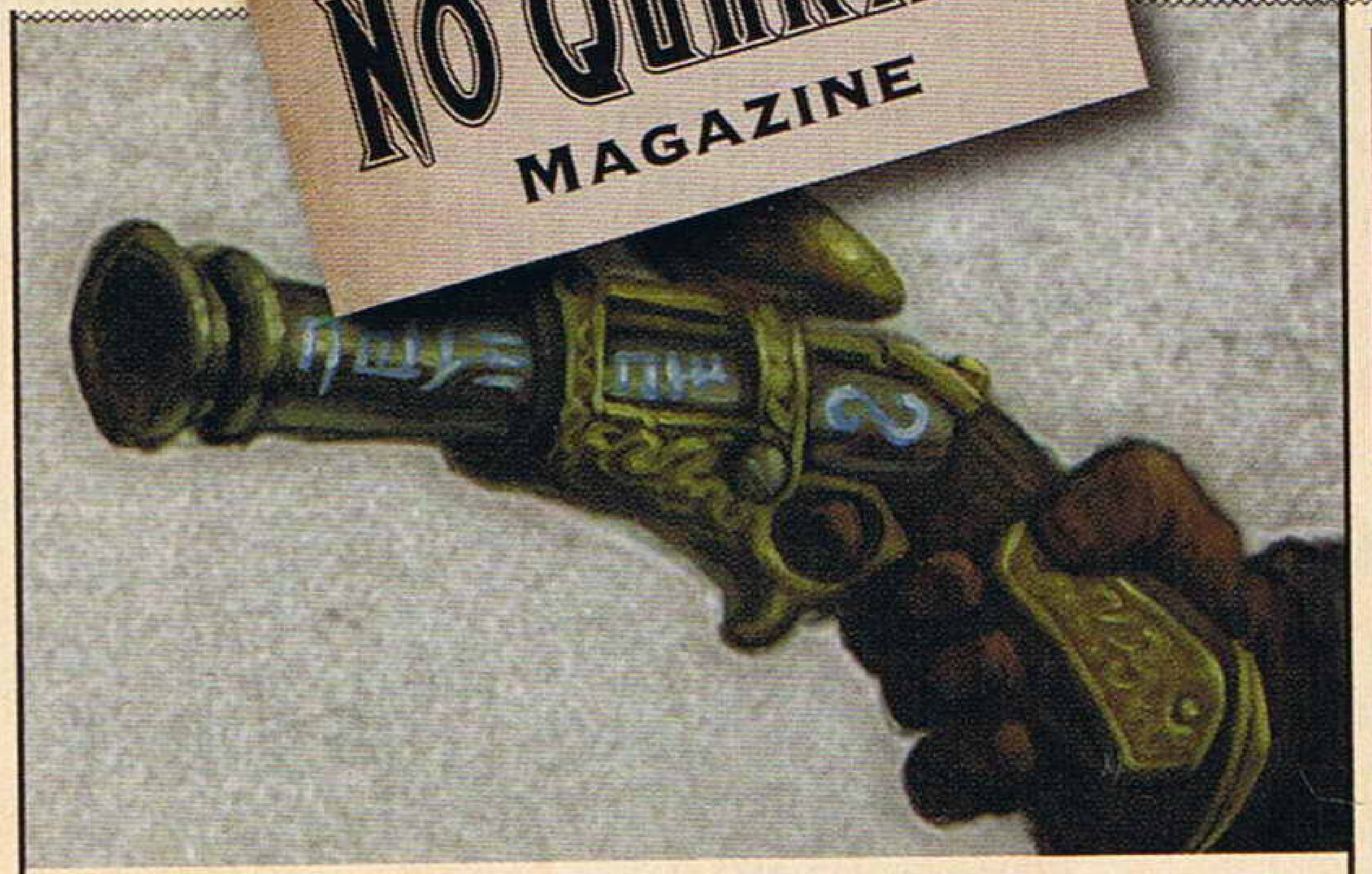

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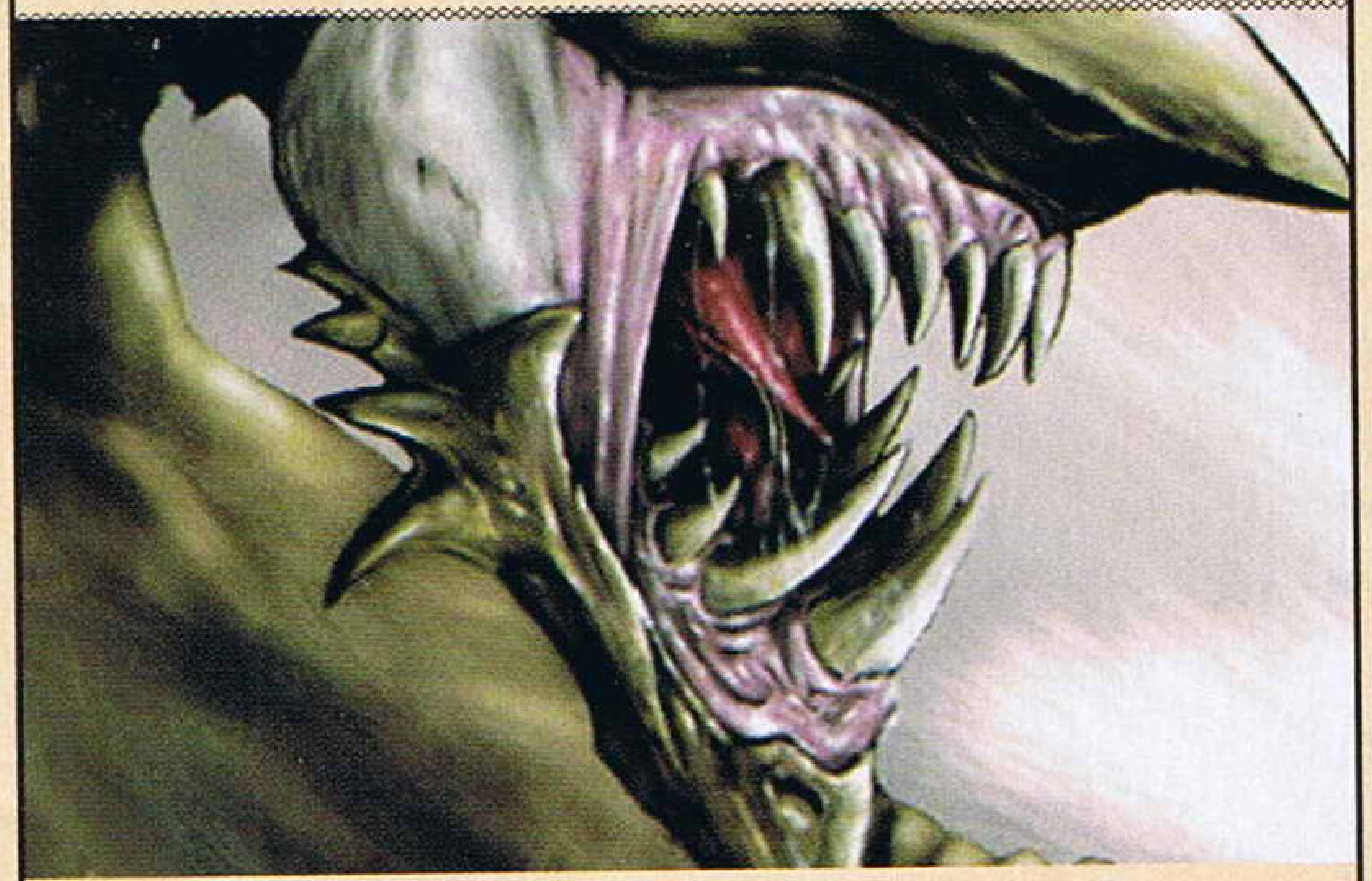

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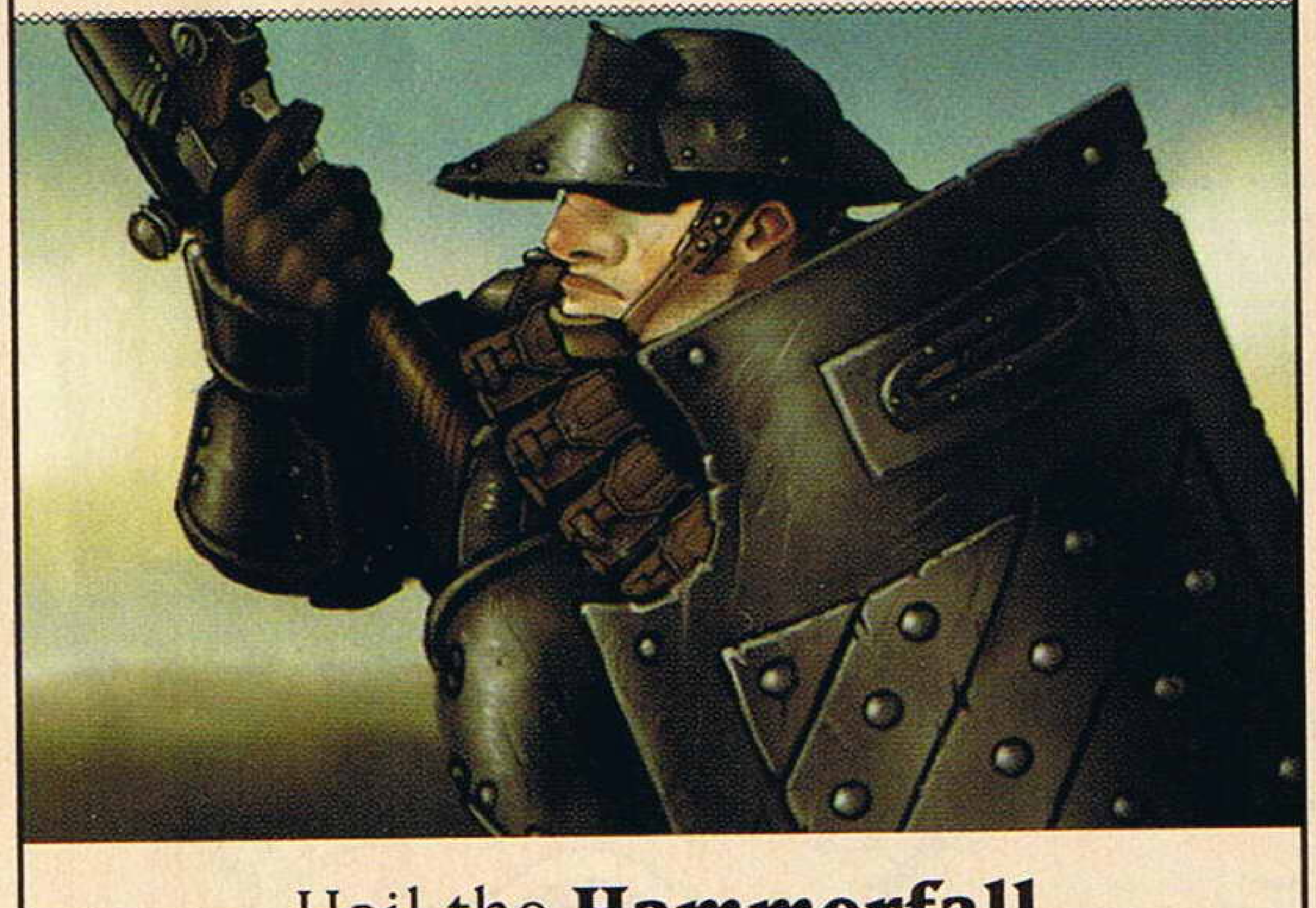

Hail the **Hammerfall**

PLUS, **Gunmages, Thamarites**, and the **Centurion Heavy Warjack!**

Gencon SoCal!

HORDES made it's unofficial debut last season at Gencon Socal in Anaheim, CA. On hand were dozens of volunteers and thousands of fans from all over the world.

We wanted to share some player snapshots of the event. If you ever get a chance to attend one of Privateer's major events, do so – they are not to be missed!

Quartermaster Dan accepts a bribe

One of our more enthusiastic volunteers. We think he wanted Dan's Donuts

HORDES was massive hit on the demo tables

Jason Soles and PG Aldric find out who the REAL rules lawyer is...

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Bryan Cutler stalks Matt Wilson before the doors open

Unleashed April 22nd, 2006

For more info visit: www.privateerpress.com/HORDES